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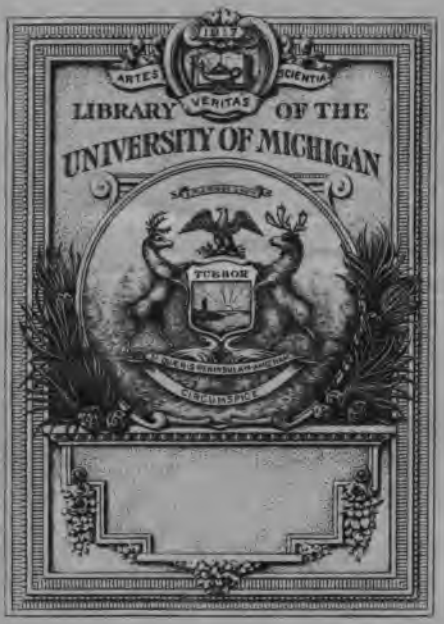
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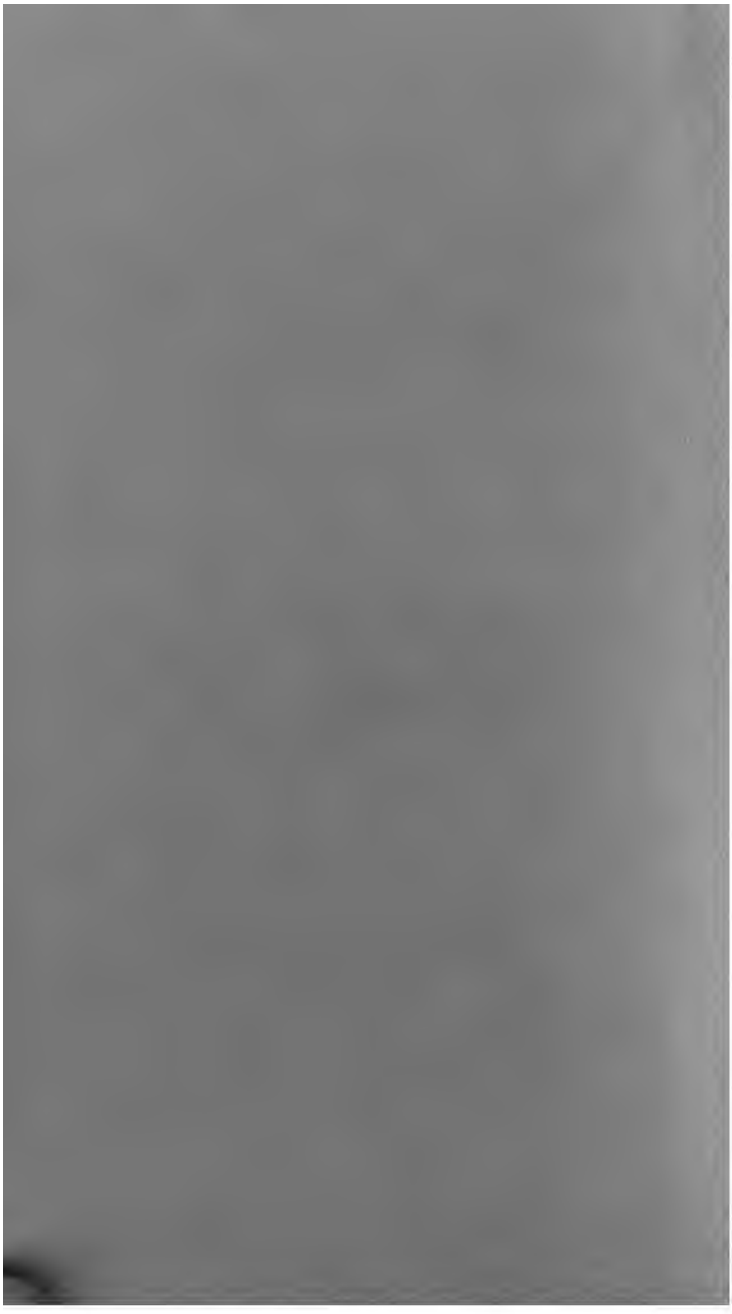

THE BOOK OF THE SHORT STORY

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THE EDITORS.

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INTRODUCTION

THE SHORT STORY

THE SHORT STORY AND THE TALE

TALES, short narratives, usually of one event, have existed of course since man first felt the need of turning actual or imagined happenings into words. Their development from the stories of the Egyptian papyri, or the fables of Pilpay, or whatever beginning one is pleased to take, has been that of narrative in general, and in each literary period before the nineteenth century the short story [1] differs from the long principally in the matter of length, although a didactic purpose, which will be found much more frequently in the briefer va-

[1] The term *short story* seems to have taken to itself a meaning only partially indicated by the adjective *short*. For the sake of clearness in language, it is essential that the use of this expression as a symbol should first be made clear, and then justified Such is the purpose of this discussion, and the attempt will demand a plain statement of that which differentiates the Short Story from the novel and from the narrative which happens to be merely short. For this last I shall henceforth in this essay use the word *tale*, and I shall use *short story* for all short narratives which differ in form or in substance from the novel, romance, or other long stories, and keep *Short Story* for a nineteenth century development in which, for reasons to be explained in the following pages, this difference is sharper and more readily defined. For a more extensive discussion of the whole subject, with a distinction between short and long narratives in earlier periods which is somewhat different from the one suggested in this essay, consult The Short Story in English (Henry Holt & Co., 1909), by the author of this introduction.

riety, may cause some divergence in the selection and use of incident, and thus in the form of the story. But, as a rule, one takes an episode, the other ten, or condensation makes the difference between them.

It is possible to select a few typical stories among the famous tales of past times. The Cupid and Psyche of The Golden Ass of Apuleius is perhaps the best example of the classic, and Ruth of the Biblical. For one type of the mediæval, Frederick of the Alberighi and His Falcon, of The Decameron; and for another, Amis and Amile are representative; and Cervantes's The Liberal Lover, of the seventeenth century, will stand for that period. Do these differ in *genre* from longer stories of their times, from Daphnis and Chloe, from Reynard the Fox, from the prose romances of chivalry, from Scudéry's Grand Cyrus? Scarcely, for they are all simple narrative, designed first of all to tell a story. In one case the plot is more compact, or perhaps there is but one main episode; or there is condensation, and, seemingly, no other important distinction.

And this is illustrated by The Book of Ruth, one of the best-told and most beautiful stories in all literature. It is simple narrative, which, like history, purports to select from the events supposed to have happened all those necessary to give a true account of the episode. In spite of the perfect unity of the story, this method might readily be continued, in such a way that our tale, without change, should become the first chapter in a longer narrative; and, supposing for an instant that the contemporary novel were in question, might take a different and a wider view, and illustrate very probably the evil results of the hasty marriage of Boaz and Ruth.

The plot of Cupid and Psyche is more extensive than that of Ruth, and covers a greater period of time; but it, too, is a simple product of selection on the author's part from a certain amount of imagined incident. If he had cut out less, or added more episodes, the story would

ıve been a long one; thus the actual tale is merely a ›ndensation of a hypothetical narrative of greater ngth. Successful condensation, to be sure, requires an t of its own, a very nice choice of incident and a very ficient setting forth of character; but that is scarcely ıough to supply a dividing line between the long story ıd the short tale.

Nor is it easy to foist a definition upon the stories f intrigue, the *novelle* and the *fabliaux* of the Middle .ges, and to tell when they differ from an incident, let us ıy, in a picaresque novel. In Boccaccio's Frederick of ıe Alberighi and His Falcon the treatment is not altoether natural, and the conception of self-sacrificing evotion serves principally to make the plot go. The iendship of Amis and Amile is a like impelling force, nd there are dozens of stories in The Decameron, and ı the Gesta Romanorum and like collections which are celetons merely. But pad out with details, construct an ctension at either end, and you have a novel of the mollett type without change of form. Select certain dovetailable" stories from The Decameron, clip off ıe first and last paragraphs, normalise the principal ıaracters, and one can obtain a structure with a notable :semblance to certain portions of Gil Blas, or Humphrey linker, minus the general reflections. A clever writer ›uld smuggle half a dozen Italian *novelle* into Nash's ıck Wilton or Smollett's Roderick Random.

What has been said of Ruth will apply to the eighteenth century tale, although the short narratives which re to be found scattered through the pages of The Spectator, The Guardian, and other periodical publications of ıe age may be noted as partial exceptions. These stoes, as Mr. Walter Morris Hart points out in his essay n Hawthorne and the Short Story, are a development the periodical essay. They are intended to illustrate ›ncretely what the essay might fail to explain as well by eneral exposition. Upon this assumption he proceeds

to derive the Short Story from the periodical essay, and with his conclusion I shall have to do later. But the point to be emphasised here is that while these stories are intended to make an explanation more telling, and therefore have a purpose beyond that of simple narrative, they may be detached from their context, and this purpose excluded. They then become simple tales, although the selection of incident will here lead towards the exposition of the point to be made, just as in the intrigue stories it favours the development of the plot. So it is with Voltaire's Jeannot and Colin, so with Christ's parables, or the moralised beast-tales, and with all fables, which, throughout the ages, have been told with a more or less didactic purpose. These eighteenth century stories are all more or less of the same type, but they constitute no new development in literature. To select a few at random, the Letter from Octavia Complaining of the Ingratitude of her Husband, which is No. 322 of The Spectator, is a good example, whose text is the inadvisability of marrying a man above you; as that of the Letter from Sir John Envil, Married to a Woman of Quality, No. 299 in the same periodical, is the inconvenience of marrying a woman of greater rank than yourself. Both of these, apart from their explanatory introduction, are simple tales requiring no moral reflection, just as Ruth does not require that one should say, at the end: "This shows that one should be humble in mind." These tales always tend to run beyond that which is necessary for the argument. The Story of Theodosius and Constantine, No. 164 of The Spectator, is such a narrative, and Dr. Langhorne expanded this into a collection of letters filling two volumes. Indeed, these tales may be easily fitted into, or abstracted from, the longer stories of the time. You cannot precisely cut up The Vicar of Wakefield into a certain number of Spectator stories, because The Vicar is a novel, and there are certain differences in structure and treatment, but it is

possible to extract a number of tales therefrom, leaving a residue of piecing and filling. One such tale would be the trip to the fair, in which Moses bought a gross of green spectacles; another, the intrigue between Olivia and Mr. Thornhill; the story of George Primrose's travels would be still another; and, by selection and condensation, enough narratives to furnish forth many Spectators could easily be provided, while the moral reflections to precede them might be found in the same text. Generally speaking, then, there would seem to be no generic distinction in narrative before the nineteenth century other than narrative short and long, tales of many episodes and tales of one, with a partial exception for fables and such didactic tales; and with this qualification, that in the *novelle* there is a compactness of plot, a certain husbandry of words and choice of incident which indicates a consciousness of the necessity of doing a great deal in a little space. It is partly this realisation, with a conception of the power of brevity, that has led to the mechanical development of the Short Story.

If what has been said so far be taken to indicate that the ancient family of tales possesses no fundamental distinction except length, and sometimes a certain point of view, to set apart its members from narrative in general, then, in order to discover any originality in the Short Story, it is necessary to find a real difference between Ruth, a Sir Roger de Coverley paper, or Ali Baba and the Forty Robbers, and Markheim, A Coward, or The Real Thing. The difference is easily *felt* by the reader; but the question remains, is it merely mechanical and due to a more dramatic structure, or is it of deeper origin?

Early in the nineteenth century, Washington Irving began the publication of short tales possessing greater merit than any hitherto produced in America. These stories were modelled, presumably, upon some of The Spectator papers, and resemble them in form. They are tales still, in that their purpose is simply narrative, but

in careful workmanship and conscious art they more closely approximate to the modern Short Story form. Irving's attitude towards the children of his fancy could not have been far different from that of Boccaccio or of Chaucer. He says, in his introduction to the Tales of a Traveler: "For my part, I consider a story merely as a frame upon which to stretch my materials. It is the play of thought, and sentiment, and language; the weaving in of characters, lightly, yet expressively delineated; the familiar and faithful exhibition of scenes in common life; and the half-concealed vein of humour that is often playing through the whole—these are among what I aim at, and upon which I felicitate myself in proportion as I think I succeed."

Let us take his story, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, which is an excellent result of such a process, and compare it with Hawthorne's The White Old Maid, a Short Story in which the element I wish to bring forward is slightly exaggerated, and therefore well fitted for our purpose. The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, like Ruth, is a story of a simple episode; although, in the complicated plot, the emphasis placed upon the *dénouement*, and the vivid description, it betrays much more conscious art. But what is the impression of the reader? It can scarcely be called an impression, although there are distinct pictures arising from the vividness of the narrative; it is rather a memory of a series of events, and to produce such a record is the aim of simple narrative. What machinery there is in the story consists mainly of devices to emphasise certain portions, to create an atmosphere, and to catch and hold the interest in the characters. Contrast now with this The White Old Maid. Very briefly, the plot is as follows: Two young women sit in a mysterious room beside the dead body of a youth they have both loved. There has been mysterious wrong done to him now dead, and the guilty one—the dark girl by his bedside—is to do penance through suffering in the world

before she may come back to that room to be forgiven. Years pass, the ancient house without inhabitant falls into gloomy disrepair; in the town a mysterious woman, robed in white, follows for a generation each funeral. One day she appears without her accustomed cause, knocks on the ancient doorway of the deserted house, and, to the confounding of the townsfolk, is admitted. A coach rolls up the street, upon its panels emblazoned the arms of a family whose last representative has just died abroad. An old woman descends, and also enters the mysterious house. After a while there is a shriek heard from within, and when the aged minister, with one of the townspeople bolder than the rest, has made his way in, and up to the strange chamber, there is the White Old Maid just at the point of death, and they are too late to learn her secret.

This, too, is a story, in the sense that something happens; and yet the real story, by which I mean the narrative which would logically connect and develop these events, is just hinted at, and is not very important. It is subordinated, indeed, to a new aim. The White Old Maid is narrative for a purpose, and this purpose is to suggest an impression and to leave us with a vivid sensation rather than a number of remembered facts. In short, it is contrived, not to leave a record of such and such an old woman who did this or that, but rather to stamp upon our minds the impression of a mystery-haunted house, mysterious figures entering, strange words, and a terrible sorrow behind all. Towards such a result the structure of the plot, every bit of description, every carefully chosen word, directly tends. There is no rambling, leisurely narrative like that of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, nor digressions, nor a natural sequence of events such as might be expected in real life. The spell of the end is over every word and every choice of incident. It is this which, for want of a less-abused word, may be called impressionism, that is characteristic

to some extent of all typical Short Stories, and serves as the most fundamental distinction between them and the earlier tales.

Before going further, it is well to try to answer the question of source which naturally arises here; and, without dipping far into a historical inquiry, it is possible to hazard a hypothesis. It is evident that following the line of influence of The Spectator papers through Irving we discover and can account for a well-modelled, carefully written, thoroughly artistic tale, best exemplified, perhaps, by Rip Van Winkle. This would and does account for much in the form of Hawthorne's stories. It is as easy to turn to the romantic school of Germany for the new elements which are to be discerned in this story of The White Old Maid, and in much more of his work. In the mystical, rhapsodical writings of that school we cannot fail to be impressed by much that is characteristic of Hawthorne, and of Poe as well. Tieck is more like Hawthorne than is any American writer; Hoffmann's characters, particularly Master Martin, powerfully suggest the half-real, symbolistic figures of Hawthorne's creation. In the introduction to The Serapion Brethren, Hoffmann formulates a method which was often Hawthorne's, and is certainly that of many impressionistic, modern Short Stories. "At least," he says, "let each one of us [the Brethren who are to tell the tales] strive earnestly and truly to grasp the image that has arisen in his mind in all its features, its colours, its lights and its shades; and then, when he feels himself really enkindled by them, let him proceed to embody them in an external description."

Then the resemblance of Feathertop to The Scarecrow of Tieck has often been pointed out, and many another similarity. But none of this proves the direct debt of the Short Story to the Germans. Hawthorne learned to read German, with difficulty, in 1843—that is, after much of his best work had been published. There

were translations of a few of Tieck's tales, to be sure, by 1825; but the best were not chosen, and it is not to be assumed that Hawthorne ever saw them. As for The Scarecrow, it was published in 1835, but in the Berlin Novellenkranz, an "annual," and Hawthorne could not possibly have read it until after its inclusion in a story collection in 1842. But the suggestion for the story is included among the many in the American Note-Books, and dated 1840. Schönbach, whose critical knowledge of the two Germans and of the American gives him an authoritative word, sums the matter up very definitely. "However," he says, "that Tieck was Hawthorne's master and was imitated by him, as Poe believed, and as has since been persistently reiterated, seems to me, merely for these internal reasons, to be highly improbable." That is from his Contribution to the Characterisation of Nathaniel Hawthorne, in Englische Studien, in which he reasons the matter from internal as well as from external evidence.

To trace an influence is always difficult, and here the result seems particularly doubtful. The Germans of the romantic school felt much as Hawthorne, and wrote somewhat like him, or he like them; that is about as far as it is safe to go. The truth of the matter appears to be that this indefinable and indefinite element of romanticism seems to have been in the air of this period, in Germany, in England, and in America, and Hawthorne perhaps derived his mysticism, his fondness for the unreal, his susceptibility to impressions, much as Wordsworth did his. In fact, in many of Wordsworth's poems impressionistic motives analogous to those which can be traced in most Short Stories are at the root of the writing. The Yew-Trees, I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, perhaps To a Highland Girl, and many another, show such an origin; and Keats and other poets of the period will immediately suggest themselves as companions, and to be classed with Wordsworth in this respect. Think for an

instant of the cause and effect of the Ode on a Grecian Urn. This phase of romanticism was in the air, then, and Hawthorne may have absorbed some of it with the Spenser, common food of all romanticists, which he read in his youth. No doubt, too, there was some [redacted]ing of German influence; nor should Mrs. Radcliffe be forgotten.

But the attempt to create an impression through narrative was not thoroughly successful in Germany. The tales of Tieck, and particularly of Hoffmann, are too often formless, rambling, without unity. They arise often enough from impressions, and are intended to convey them. Indeed, in the case of Hoffmann, we have sometimes the history of the actual impression to compare with the story which resulted. But these stories are not good Short Stories, because they do not confine themselves to one unified purpose; many of them have *motifs* akin to that of The White Old Maid, but they lack the architectonics necessary to convey them. The best stories of these authors will be found thus deficient —such tales as those in The Serapion Brethren; Tieck's The Goblet, or The Fair-Haired Eckbert. Fouqué's Undine is structurally better designed to gain the end of an impression; but that is a comparatively long story, and the impression the very broad one of the mystery of nature.

But Hawthorne, saturated with the same spirit, susceptible as they to the impressions which nature, character, strange incongruities, horrible fancies, made upon his imagination, had at his command the well-ordered instrument which Irving and his literary forefathers had been polishing for their needs; and the use he made of it is largely responsible for the Short Story.

This does not assert that Hawthorne was among the first of the impressionists; nor, indeed, that a Short Story writer is a so-called impressionist at all, since that word seems to possess a dangerous variety of meanings. Hawthorne's story, it seems, is intended to suggest a

picture to the mind of the reader, or to produce an impression upon it, which will resemble that vivid one which either actually or in imagination the writer received [redacted] the combination of the mysterious figure and the [redacted]nge old house, full of gloomy suggestions, left its record upon his mind. Indeed, to convey this seems to be the main purpose of his writing; and, throughout, the story is constructed to produce such an effect. Poe had such an attempt in mind in his work; he expresses it in his criticism of Hawthorne's stories, published in Graham's Magazine for May of 1842. "If wise," he says of the writer of tales, "he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing the preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one preëstablished design." This "preconceived effect" may be regarded as the impression which the author wishes to convey.

So the nucleus of Bret Harte's story, The Luck of Roaring Camp, may have been the glimpse of a lank, rough figure, with a tiny baby in its arms; and, in spite of the excellent plot, a feeling akin to the pleasurable emotion which would follow upon such a scene in real life remains longest with the reader. According to this theory the process, if one should attempt to write a Short Story, might be something like this: I leave my room and meet a drunken beggar reeling from the gutter. As I turn to avoid him, he pulls himself together and quotes huskily a dozen lines of Virgil with a bow and a flourish, and stumbles off into the darkness. I make him into a story, and, be the plot what it may, the effect

upon the reader that I shall strive for will be a vivid impression of incongruity, not far different from that which I felt when the drunkard turned scholar and relapsed. Not all Short Stories can be analysed back to their basic element as easily as this one may be built up, but with many the process is easy and obvious. Nearly every *conte* of Maupassant is a perfect example; his titles, Fear, Happiness, A Coward, would lead one to suspect as much. In the *motifs* and suggestions for stories, some utilised later, some not, which may be found in quantity scattered through Hawthorne's American Note-Books, such an impression is often noted at the moment of its inception. Here, in the American Note-Books, ii, 176, is: "The print in blood of a naked foot to be traced through the streets of a town," which seems to inspire Dr. Grimshawe's Secret; and again, N. B. i, 13: "In an old house a mysterious knocking might be heard on the wall, where had formerly been a doorway now bricked up," which is applied in Peter Goldthwaite's Treasure; also: "A stranger, dying, is buried; and after many years two strangers come in search of his grave and open it." But Hawthorne inclined more often to moral, philosophical reflections for his beginnings, such as: "To make one's own reflection in a mirror the subject of a story," afterwards used in Monsieur du Miroir; and then his stories often become symbolistic tales, or didactic narratives. An excellent tale, and yet not to be ranked as a typical Short Story, is The Great Stone Face. Another, The Birthmark, is not so obviously allegorical, yet certainly springs from a philosophical source.

Kipling has written many stories whose *motifs* are impressions, such as The Ship that Found Herself, and The Mark of the Beast, to take two very different ones. Stories of horror, such as the narrative last mentioned and Poe's The Pit and the Pendulum, are usually of this nature. Indeed, nearly every collection of Short Stories

may be drawn upon for examples. In Henry James's story, Flickerbridge, included in his volume, The Better Sort, the action of the story can be explained only by the deep impression which the quaint, delightful lady of Flickerbridge makes upon the hero, an impression it is the intent of the author to convey to the reader; and so with many another.

But the commonest variety is not so simple. Stevenson's A Lodging for the Night, Kipling's Without Benefit of Clergy, Bret Harte's The Outcasts of Poker Flat, Maurice Hewlett's Madonna of the Peach-Tree, and perhaps a majority of the magazine stories of the day, preserve the old desire to tell a story well as an equal or the dominant motive, only modified by the attempt to convey that impression which was probably at the foundation of the narrative. I venture to say that an imagined contrast between the proud, God-honouring, simple-minded seigneur, and the poor devil of a Villon, clever and rascally, was the starting-point of A Lodging for the Night; and perhaps a sight or a thought of such a group as that about the fire in The Outcasts of Poker Flat, the pure and the stained, the reprobate and the innocent, all under the spell of a common peril, was the germ of that great story. But in both instances the plot is highly developed, and by no means entirely aims at these single effects, although in each case they are probably sought for as the sum of the story.

This subdivision will naturally suggest what is known as the "character-sketch," a form of the Short Story in which again there is another element besides that of pure impressionism. Take, for instance, Verga's Jeli the Shepherd, a story of a simple herdboy of good instincts fostered by close association with nature, a love like hero-worship, and a mind slow to admit new ideas. The story tells how he loves and marries Mara; and when the knowledge comes to him that she is false, he merely works on stupidly until one day the realisation

comes, he sees her with her lover, and a man's throat is cut. This story is psychological, it deals with character-exposition, but it approaches it through an impression; the attempt is first of all to make the reader *feel* this simple herdboy's mental make-up and personality; and then, by added incident, fact, and explanation, appeal to the reason, that the impression may be explained and made convincing. Many of Miss Mary E. Wilkins's New England stories are similarly constructed. Worn old women, pale girls with colourless ideals—Maupassant would be content with making us feel such types—and often, as in Arethusa and most of her Understudies, Miss Wilkins goes no further, for Arethusa seems to be the working out of that feeling which one gets from a chance sight of a shy girl with the wild instincts of maidenhood in her eyes; and another, The Monkey, the memory of a homesick monkey reaching his little arms restlessly through the bars of his cage. But the commoner type of the Short Story of character deals with an impression reënforced by psychological work, or motive-seeking, or thought-exposition, designed to appeal to the reason of the reader, to confirm and make more complete, more reasonable, the impressions he has received from the story. Björnson, Henry James, Turgeneff—there are dozens who have written such stories.

Mr. W. M. Hart, in the essay which I have already mentioned, feels, evidently, that a purpose ulterior to that of mere narrative is the characteristic quality of a Short Story, but he takes this purpose to be explanatory, and a proof that an essay is in the family tree, say of the Plain Tales from the Hills. The transition from the tales with a purpose of The Spectator, which Irving imitated and Hawthorne studied, to the "impression" story of the latter author, is not difficult; but the step is a long one, and originality can scarcely be denied to the latter form. What appeal The Spectator tale makes, beyond

that of its narrative, is to the intellect solely; while the first aim of the later stories of which I have been speaking is to make the reader *feel* that with which the writer was impressed. This point may be illustrated by a comparison of Spectator paper No. 299, Letter from Sir John Envil, Married to a Woman of Quality, with Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's story, David Berry. The first deals with "those calamities and misfortunes which a weak man suffers from wrong measures and ill-concerted schemes of life;" that is, the danger arising from marrying a wife above his rank; the second with the downfall of a virtuous old shoemaker, brought about indirectly by his ambitious dame. I have quoted a line or so from the introduction to The Spectator paper, and it is evident that this story begins with an abstraction, a theory, which is dressed in narrative to enforce the point. But it is just as clear that David Berry is first of all an idea, a memory, or an impression of the kindly old fellow, simple and honest and overgenerous, and that the moral side, the lesson that one may learn, is merely the almost inevitable result which follows the working out of a character which would make such an impression upon us. One story works from the abstract forward, the other from the concrete backward. And thus the line of development of the Short Story from the essay source, while in part traceable, is sufficiently tenuous.

Although this impressionism, used strictly as defined, when combined with the other elements of a Short Story, seems to make for a new literary form, there is nevertheless much earlier writing with impressionistic tendencies. Sterne is full of it, and A Sentimental Journey has a kind of impressionism as its most serious purpose. But A Sentimental Journey lacks all the other qualifications of a Short Story. It rambles; it has no particular unity; it observes none of the rigid requirements which confine a Short Story to one incident, one main impression, and a unified, climactic development.

It would be possible to select an episode such as that of the glove-merchant's wife, or that of the *fille de chambre,* which would have a considerable unity, but the impressions he there chronicles are slight ones, so slight that a graceful style, wit, and chance hits can convey them, and the narrative amounts to nothing, or is there for its own sake. Many poets, too, have been praised for, or accused of, impressionism; but, except in regard to sources, that is outside the inquiry, since it is with the Short Story as with the novel, its elements are to be found elsewhere; but it is their combination, and their development when so combined, which results in a form distinct from its antecedents.

The particular terseness, vividness attained by choice of words, rapid description, and swift action characteristic of this modern story, are all naturally employed in the attempt to convey with sufficient force the impression which the author has received. In the simple narrative of the early tales these devices are utilised to some extent. But it is this new, or newly-matured purpose, which has brought to a nicety that which may be called the machinery of the Short Story. To tell a tale well requires careful arrangement of events, a careful proportioning, careful adjustment of description and of narration, of character and of action, and this may result in such an excellent story as Wandering Willie's Tale. But, by means of this well-told tale, to make a vivid impression of a mood, an incongruity, a pathetic situation, or a strange companionship, as in Kipling's The Brushwood Boy, a still more careful art is necessary. Every word must count; and, for the sake of definite outline, everything not essential must be rigorously excluded. The result is a concise, narrative picture of something striking in events or in character, or in the union of the two.

Suppose this process be applied to a tale which is to be told for the story simply, notably a tale with a re-

versal. Should this story be written with the terseness, the vivid action, the condensed description, the absolute unity and totality of the Short Story form, the result will be a vivid impression of the plot, and particularly of the reversal, but not an impression in precisely the sense which I have used before. Many modern stories may be included here, of which the ubiquitous detective story, best exemplified perhaps in Poe's The Purloined Letter, is the most familiar. For the tales with a reversal, a surprise at the end, we must look to work of a lighter mood. Some of H. C. Bunner's Short Sixes, such a tale as T. B. Aldrich's Marjorie Daw, and many familiar narratives, will be remembered and so classified. It is very difficult now to find good Short Stories in which some trace of the impressionistic element cannot be discovered, but those belonging to the class of The Purloined Letter or Marjorie Daw may be said to be tales, in the sense defined, built along the lines developed for the Short Story; and this highly-perfected, very dramatic structure is largely a result of the attempt to convey an impression by narrative.

And, finally, it must be remembered that it is never advisable to plot too mathematically the boundaries of literary forms. The artist works with only his own purpose in view, and the most we can hope to accomplish is to ascertain what he has done and how. He certainly does not sit down to write a tale or a Short Story according to the choice of the moment. But the story-writer of to-day does seem to have accomplished something which differs from that which the old tale-teller attempted to achieve. There are probably several ways of getting at this difference. Professor Edward Everett Hale, Jr., suggests that the handling of the tale is simple and the interest centred upon incident, while the handling of the Short Story is complex and the interest there fixed upon situation. This seems to be a very useful distinction, for nothing is more characteristic of the more original of

our modern writers of fiction long and short than their interest in situation and their disregard of machine-made plot. And it would seem probable that it is a striking situation which usually makes the most vivid impression upon the writer of Short Stories, and is to be found at the base of his productions. So with the hypothetical story of the drunkard who could quote Virgil from the gutter, and so with most of the stories hitherto mentioned. But it is the attempt to convey the impression, regardless of how it was received, that is probably responsible for much that is new in the Short Story form.

THE SHORT STORY AND THE NOVEL

Although this hypothesis of impressionism may give us ground for believing that the Short Story contains elements which set it apart from the tale, even when its purpose is not mainly suggestive, yet it is not a sufficient answer to the interesting question of the relation of the Short Story to the novel. For it is obvious that this particular kind of suggestive purpose may figure largely in a novel, even when it is not classed among those commonly called impressionistic. It is possible to take, say, the river episode in The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, where, as may be remembered, Richard Feverel, under romantic circumstances, saves his future betrothed from a ducking, and to say that Meredith wishes to convey to the reader a vivid impression of the conjunction of the fresh girl and the moody boy, whose spirit is tinder to her spark. If this is impressionistic, and there is no other distinction, then a Short Story may be merely an episode abstracted from a hypothetical novel.

Professor Brander Matthews says that unity of impression belongs to the former; and this, in a sense, is true, but as a definition it seems to lack precision. Poe used this phrase in argument, and thought mainly of the time element. A story could be read at a sitting; a novel

must be read in gulps, as it were, of a handful of chapters each, and the impression which the unity of the novel should convey naturally suffers. But the phrase now seems to be used with reference to the effect of the design of the narrative upon the reader, whether read in one sitting or a dozen. A single, vivid impression is to be the result of the Short Story, while many diverse yet harmonious impressions are to follow upon the reading of a novel. Yet surely many novels, such as George Eliot's Romola or Meredith's The Egoist, leave a unified impression not entirely differing from that of a story which bears out the definition given. In the first, the degeneration of Tito Melema is not only the central thread, but also the digest of the whole story; as, in the other book, is the egoism of Sir Willoughby Patterne. Neither this quality, nor the unity gained by condensation, seems to explain and to justify clearly the separate classification of the Short Story and the novel.

There is another way of getting at this matter. The great difference between a poem, a historical essay, and a novel upon the same subject, lies in the point of view. The poem works through imagination and suggestion. The history deals with the facts that the poem almost neglects, and has to do with selection among those facts. The novel, supposing it to be historical, uses first the methods of the history, leavens the result with fancy, sets it forth suggestively, and, keeping in view the end of art instead of the necessity for truth, produces still other results. Compare, for instance, Carlyle's life of Cromwell, Milton's sonnet on Cromwell, and Scott's novel, Woodstock, based upon the life of the same hero. It is such a distinction in the point of view which differentiates a novel from a Short Story.

From the eighteenth century downward to near the present time, the great novelists have tried, from their little Olympus, to get the all-embracing view, to record the good and the bad, the thought and the action, the

youthful deed and the aged penalty. Either by details, or, when that was not practicable, by suggestion, their transcription of life has been as full as they could make it. Their art is always to imitate the breadth and the fulness of living. At one extreme of this imitation is realism, and there the picture is somewhat photographic; at the other extreme is romance, where the reader's imagination is tickled into supplying much not plainly told by the author. In either case, the life depicted in the books, like the life in the world, has many facets; and, even though the multiplicity of actual experience may not be present, the suggestion of it, if the book is good, will not be lacking. Thus this novel is natural, in so far as any artistic transfer of the real world into the world of imagination can be natural.

But here we must make a further qualification and separation. All modern novels do not attempt to convey the suggestion of the whole of life, facet by facet, even though, to a greater extent than the Short Story, they ape the multiplicity of actual experience. What of the so-called impressionistic school of which, in English at least, Henry James is the head? If you examine his Washington Square, you will find it to be a love-story of some length and of actual manners; a novel, indeed, according to definition; and yet every incident, every detail, every bit of description is focused upon the relation between the dull and faithful Catherine and her lover, the brilliant but unsteady Maurice Townsend. The story covers the life of the girl to middle age, yet there is only one point of view, and, at the end, one impression. But this impression is not the result of the fusion of numerous observations, each drawn, as in real life, from some attitude, action, or remark upon character. This is the method of Romola and of The Egoist, but in Washington Square it is attained by the presentation of certain incidents selected from the girl's life-

story. To use a geological figure, Henry James follows a single vein throughout its course by means of an occasional outcrop. Among foreigners, Turgeneff has done notable work which must be regarded from this point of view. His Mumu is the story of the brute love of a gigantic serf, Gerasim, for first a woman and then a dog. The interest of the story centres entirely in this love, and in the character of which it is a result. His A Lear of the Steppes is focused even more narrowly upon the steps to a tragedy. The Diary of a Superfluous Man wonderfully presents a weak-willed, conceited lover, doing no work in the world and aware of it, but hungering for the tribute of praise and affection which only one worthy of it can gain. This is a life-story from birth to death, but this unfortunate's character, or lack of it, can be thoroughly illustrated in the course of his short love-affair; and, consequently, the incidents selected are nearly all from that event itself, or preparatory to it, or in summary of what it has shown. Select certain passages regarding Levin from Tolstoy's Anna Karénina, and you could construct a companion piece. These "impressionistic novels" and their class, to some extent an intermediate form between the novel of the Vanity Fair type and the Short Story, may perhaps be looked upon as expanded Short Stories, and belonging to their *genre*. Indeed, some of the stories of Turgeneff may be called by either name. Without the concentration of the Short Story and the resulting vividness, they are told with a like view, and a like selection of those facts which are at the base of all narration.

But in the novel which attempts to give a natural picture of the various sides of life there is a point of view which differs from that of the Short Story. If the name had not already been appropriated, I should like to say the *historical novel*, because in this respect it follows the methods of history. The "ubiquitous novel" it has been called, I believe, and this expresses the dis-

tinction which results in another structure and another treatment from that of the Short Story.

The primal difference lies in the way the authors view their crude materials, the life about them. While the novel-writer, even one of the impressionistic type, aims at an eminently natural method of transcription, the author of the Short Story adopts a very artificial one. His endeavour is to give a striking narrative picture of one phase of the situation or the character, as the case may be. His aim is towards a strip lengthwise, disregarding much that a cross-section might show. He deals with a series of incidents, closely related to one another but not at all to the by-play of life which, in reality, must accompany them. He treats of a mood always existing, but in the story supremely indicated; perhaps of an adventure or a catastrophe, which differs from the *dénouement* of a novel in that the interest is concentrated: the cause is in the hero's character, ready-made for the occasion; the results are in the circumstances of the story. If all narration amounts, as critics say, merely to a simplification of experience, imaginative or real, then a Short Story is simplification to the highest degree. We are selecting far more than in a novel, and this because we are looking only for the chain of related incidents that go to make up one event. We are picking out the steps that make the tragedy, as in Maupassant's famous story, The Necklace, or in Kipling's Without Benefit of Clergy; we are looking only for what bears upon our narrow purpose, that the interest may be concentrated, and the conception vivified, beyond the power of a novel. The process is very artificial, but very powerful; it is like turning a telescope upon one nebula in the heavens. Thus it is the standpoint of the author that makes the distinction between a short novel, always excepting the impressionistic variety, and a long Short Story. In the one the writer digests life-histories, or portions of them; in the other he looks

only for the episode, which, like the bubble on the stream, is part of, and yet distinguished from, the main current. Recognising the futility in certain cases, and the needlessness in others, of expressing the whole truth, he succeeds much better with the half. He foregoes completeness and gains in force, and this by a change in the standpoint from which he views his world of fact and of fancy.

Evidence that the Short Story and the novel are not products of the same artistic process has been sought in the frequent inability of writers of good Short Stories to construct equally good novels, and if this argument is not pushed too far it is a good one. Hawthorne, perhaps, certainly Maupassant and Kipling, men who made their literary reputations by their Short Stories, found, and in the case of Kipling and his Kim, still find, difficulty with the longer form of fiction. Björnson had trouble in handling his novels, Flags are Flying in Town and Harbour, and In God's Way; and much more testimony of the same character may be gathered. But there is much to be said against an absolute statement, for Tolstoy, Dickens, and many other great novelists have succeeded with the Short Story; and the excellence of Stevenson's unfinished Weir of Hermiston is evident enough even in the fragment which he gave us. It is safe to say no more than that the writer of Short Stories finds it generally difficult, and sometimes impossible, to enlarge his conceptions and broaden and lengthen his action to the scope which the novel demands, with this statement in reverse equally true for the novelists. But this is just what might be expected if, as I have endeavoured to show, it is true that the difference between the modes lies in the point of view. For if the writer, who, aside from his artistic faculty, is after all merely a transcriber, gifted with the power of observation and granted the right of selection from what he sees, should look always for the essential facts that make up his sin-

gle episode and produce his impression, he might see only Short Stories in the life about him, and find it as difficult to adjust his vision to a different perspective as the forester who looks only for single trees, their height and kind, and now would wish, with artist's eye, to comprehend the curves and colours in the wide sweep of the mountain forest.

To sum up briefly what has been said heretofore, it might be asserted that what is loosely called the modern Short Story seems to differ from the old tale by a very scientific adaptation of means to end, which end may be called vividness; by a structure which, in its nice proportions and potentiality for adequate expression, is a more excellent instrument than anything the old tale can show; and by an interest in situation, as a rule, rather than in simple incident. Also through the source, which is an impression or impressions, usually of a situation; and the purpose, which is fitly to convey these impressions as well as to tell a story. (Ruth will do very well as an example of the tale) (The Purloined Letter, as a tale done into Short Story form) and (Markheim, A Coward, or Without Benefit of Clergy, for the typical Short Story.) If it is necessary to say what characterises all of the shorter stories now being written, I should suggest that it is an attempt at greater vividness, and this attempt is made largely through those practices in composition which the endeavour to convey fitly an impression has brought into common use.

In a comparison with the novel, we may take all these shorter stories, and say that the difference lies in the point of view—provided that the novel be of that class which aims at a natural transcription of all sides of life, as does Middlemarch or Vanity Fair. On the other hand, it may be said that the Short Story differs from the "impressionistic" novel in concentration only. That literary variety strikes deeper, goes further; but the Short Story is intended for surface-work; it is formed to

catch and record the striking things, and to make them more striking. It is a precipitate of the important things from the general solution, and as such has a force distinctly its own and a form as distinctive; which, through the efforts of the great men who have laboured with it, has been developed to gain and to exercise its power.

THE RISE OF THE SHORT STORY

New developments in literature do not arise nor become popular without reason. There are causes, artistic and otherwise, for the present blossoming of the Short Story, causes which in themselves differ from those which have made the novel flourish. In a time of much writing tastes are quickly jaded, and the Short Story, because it is terse, striking, highly-coloured, and somewhat new, meets with quick applause. Its brevity is of advantage, for many people can be made to swallow good literature in a pill who reject it in larger doses. But the class of readers thus gained accounts less for the literary development of the tale than for the vast number of poor Short Stories now breeding manifold. Such a clientèle can increase the production, and will usually debase the quality, of any form of literary endeavour, as the attitude of the prurient-minded Londoners of the Restoration increased and debased the output of the contemporary dramatists. Unintelligent appreciation is not likely to be responsible for a high development in art. That there has been an artistic advance, and a great one, in story-telling, needs for illustration only a comparison of a Blackwood's tale of the 30's and a Kipling story of the 90's.

The old desire for something new and more pungent would account for the encouragement which this new development has received. And there is an undoubted need, in a generation whose life is greatly varied by widely diffused knowledge and extensive intercommuni-

cation, for the vivid expression of little things. This would add another impulse. But a literary structure which displays the greatest nicety of form to be found outside the domain of poetry indicates some cause more æsthetic than those so far mentioned. In simple truth, the Short Story has attained a wonderful perfection because wonderful men have worked with it and through it. It has just come into its own. In the England of the 30's, publishers would not look upon anything less than a volume of fiction as a serious literary effort—and they preferred three volumes. It was only in the first half of the last century that Irving, Hawthorne, and Poe in America began the cult of the short narrative, and Mérimée in France achieved his masterpieces of simple brevity. Coppée's search for the inevitable word, and Maupassant's refinement of the *conte*, came later still. The Short Story was adapted to the needs of the time and to the tastes of the people. Men of genius found through it a new voice, and the attempt to perfect, to give laws and a form to the instrument, progressed because of the men who tried. In pre-Irvingian times these authors employed the tale for the by-products of their minds; since then it has served to express some of the great conceptions of their genius. It is this, with its new purpose as a Short Story, which best accounts for the chastening of its form.

Except in one instance, which is the vivid expression of single incidents or detached movements of life, the Short Story is not to be chosen before the novel; but in its capacity for perfection of structure, for nice discrimination in means, and for a satisfying exposition of the full power of words, it is much superior to the novel, and can rank below only the poem. But the novel and the Short Story are distinct instruments, differently designed, for diverse needs; and with such a point of view it is impossible not to grant to the latter a separate use and classification.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

THIS list, while presenting, it is hoped, a fair showing of the most representative tales and Short Stories, is intended to be suggestive merely, and indicative of what may be found in the literatures that are drawn upon. Its greatest usefulness will be in connection with a library catalogue. For this reason, the titles of the various works listed, with the exception of the Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew, Icelandic, Latin, and Russian, have been left in their original form. The arrangement is chronological as far as the year is concerned; and while the classic literatures have been separated, the mediæval and modern, because of their closer connection, and for simplicity, have been grouped together. Stories in verse have been listed after the mediæval period only in the case of a few pressing instances, such as the Fables (1668-94) of La Fontaine, and in every case have been marked by an asterisk (*). Both individual stories and story collections have been listed; and the dates, as far as possible, are those of first publication, or of composition. The question of distinction between the *conte* and the *nouvelle*, the *roman* and the tale, etc., has been insufficiently treated, although for the mediæval period Ten Brink and Gaston Paris have something to say of the matter; and Ferdinand Brunetière, in his Introduction to the Balzac volume of the Little French Masterpieces series, has attempted to differentiate the *conte*, the *nouvelle*, and the *roman*. For the present list a tale has been defined as a short narrative of one, or few, events, and of considerable simplicity of construction. In the mediæval period, where the literary species are well marked, it has seemed advisable to exclude all *romans d'aventure*,

retaining only such prose tales as Aucassin et Nicolette to serve as an example of the comparatively simple tale into which the complicated romance may easily fall. After the Renaissance it is more difficult to draw the line, and such comparatively long works as Aphra Behn's Oroonoko (1688) and Voltaire's Candide (1758) have been listed because they seem to belong here rather than under the novel. Other things being equal, the shorter narratives of an author have been listed, as nearer the ideal of the tale. The modern Short Story seems to be a special condition of the tale in which the story is told with a certain end in view (see introductory essay). With stories of this kind have been listed others, such as Rip Van Winkle, and Wandering Willie's Tale, excellent short stories, possessing unity of impression, but not the conscious impressionistic purpose, and the resulting form, which distinguishes the narratives for which, in this volume, the term Short Story, both words capitalized, has been used.

I

Egyptian Papyrus Stories (4000 B. C. TO 1000 B. C.):

Tales of the Magicians (Vth or VIth Dynasties, from about 4000 to about 3000 B. C.):

Khafra's Tale.
Baufra's Tale.
Hordedef's Tale.

The Peasant and the Workman (IXth Dynasty, about 3000 B. C.).

The Shipwrecked Sailor (XIIth Dynasty, about 2500 B. C.).

The Adventures of Sanehat (XIIth Dynasty, about 2100 B. C.).

The Doomed Prince (XVIIIth Dynasty, about 1450 B. C.).

Anpu and Bata (XIXth Dynasty, about 1350 B. C.).

Setna and the Magic Book (XIXth Dynasty, about 1300 B. C.).

THE SHIPWRECKED SAILOR

THE SHIPWRECKED SAILOR

ONE of the most complete documents existing on papyrus is the story of The Shipwrecked Sailor. The tale itself seems to date from a very early period, when imagination could still have full play in Upper Nubia. The Papyrus, which apparently is of the age of the XIIth Dynasty, is preserved at St. Petersburg, but is still unpublished.

W. M. Flinders Petrie says, in his Egyptian Tales, of the stories preserved on papyrus: "It will be noticed how the growth of the novel is shadowed out in the varied grounds and treatment of the tales. The earliest is purely a collection of marvels or fabulous incidents of the simplest kind. Then we advance to contrasts between town and country, between Egypt and foreign lands. Then personal adventure, and the interest in schemes and successes, becomes the staple material; while only in the later periods does character come in as the groundwork. The same may be seen in English literature—first the tales of wonders and strange lands, then the novel of adventure, and lastly the novel of character."

Of The Shipwrecked Sailor itself it may be said that the construction is much more advanced than the earlier Tales of the Magicians, of the Vth or VIth Dynasties. Says Mr. Petrie: "The family of serpents and the manner of the great serpent is well conceived, and there are many fine touches of literary quality: such as noise as of thunder, the trees shaking and the earth being moved at the appearance of the great serpent—the speeches of the serpent and his threat—the sailors who had seen heaven and earth—the contempt of the serpent for his offerings . . . and the scene of departure. All of

these points show a firm hand and practised taste, although there is still a style of simplicity clinging to it which agrees well with its date in the XIIth Dynasty. . . . The colophon of the copyist at the end shows by the style of the name that it belongs to the earlier part of the XIIth Dynasty; and if so, the composition might be referred to the opening of foreign trade under Sankhkara or Amenemhat I." Or, roughly speaking, about the year 2500 B. C.

The idea of an enchanted island, which has risen from the waves and will sink again, is seen to be one of the very oldest plots for a tale of marvels. In the story of The Shipwrecked Sailor is possibly the origin of The Story of Sindbad the Sailor, of The Thousand and One Nights. It will be remembered that Sindbad lands on an island of serpents in his Third Voyage.

The present version is taken from Egyptian Tales, by W. M. Flinders Petrie. The few foot-notes added to the story, on some points which may need explanation, are the work of Francis L. Griffith.

AUTHORITIES: [1]

Egyptian Tales, by W. M. Flinders Petrie.
Egyptian Archæology, by Gaston Maspero.

[1] The lists of "authorities" given in this volume make no attempt to be exhaustive, or to include "primary" authorities. Their purpose is to refer the reader to the most accessible and reliable means of further information in regard to the literatures, or the lives and writings of the authors, in question.—[ED.]

THE SHIPWRECKED SAILOR

The wise servant said: "Let thy heart be satisfied, O my lord, for that we have come back to the country; after we have long been on board, and rowed much, the prow has at last touched land. All the people rejoice and embrace us one after another. Moreover, we have come back in good health, and not a man is lacking; although we have been to the ends of Wawat,[1] and gone through the land of Senmut,[2] we have returned in peace, and our land—behold, we have come back to it. Hear me, my lord; I have no other refuge. Wash thee and turn the water over thy fingers, then go and tell the tale to the Majesty."

His lord replied: "Thy heart continues still its wandering words; but although the mouth of a man may save him, his words may also cover his face with confusion. Wilt thou do, then, as thy heart moves thee? This that thou wilt say, tell quietly."

The sailor then answered: "Now I shall tell that which has happened to me, to my very self. I was going to the mines of Pharaoh, and I went down on the Sea[3] on a ship of 150 cubits long and 40 cubits wide, with 150 sailors of the best of Egypt, who had seen heaven and earth, and whose hearts were stronger than lions. They had said that the wind would not be contrary, or that there would be none. But as we approached the land the wind arose, and threw up waves eight cubits high. As for me, I seized a piece of wood; but those who were in the vessel perished, without one remaining. A wave threw me on an island, after that I had been three days alone, without a companion beside my own heart. I laid me in a thicket and the shadow covered me.

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[1] Lower Nubia.—[ED.]

[2] District about the first cataract.—[ED.]

[3] A name often applied to the great river Nile.—[ED.]

Then stretched I my limbs to try to find something for my mouth. I found there figs and grapes, all manner of good herbs, berries and grain, melons of all kinds, fishes and birds. Nothing was lacking. And I satisfied myself, and left on the ground that which was over, of what my arms had been filled withal. I dug a pit, I lighted a fire, and I made a burnt-offering unto the gods.

"Suddenly I heard a noise as of thunder, which I thought to be that of a wave of the sea. The trees shook and the earth was moved. I uncovered my face, and I saw that a serpent drew near. He was thirty cubits long, and his beard greater than two cubits; his body was as overlaid with gold, and his colour as that of true lazuli. He coiled himself before me.

"Then he opened his mouth, while that I lay on my face before him, and he said to me: 'What has brought thee, what has brought thee, little one, what has brought thee? If thou sayest not speedily what has brought thee to this isle, I will make thee know thyself; as a flame thou shalt vanish; if thou tellest me not something I have not heard, or which I knew not before thee.'

"Then he took me in his mouth and carried me to his resting-place, and laid me down without any hurt. I was whole and sound, and nothing was gone from me. Then he opened his mouth against me, while that I lay on my face before him, and he said: 'What has brought thee, what has brought thee, little one, what has brought thee to this isle which is in the sea, and of which the shores are in the midst of the waves?'

"Then I replied to him, and holding my arms low before him,[1] I said to him: 'I was embarked for the mines by the order of the Majesty, in a ship; 150 cubits was its length, and the width of it 40 cubits. It had 150 sailors of the best of Egypt, who had seen heaven and earth, and the hearts of whom were stronger than lions. They said that the wind would not be contrary, or that there would be none. Each of them exceeded his companion in the prudence of his heart and the strength of his arm, and I was not beneath any of them. A storm came upon us while we were on the

[1] The usual Egyptian attitude of respect to a superior was to stand bent slightly forward, holding the arms downward.—[ED.]

sea. Hardly could we reach to the shore when the wind waxed yet greater, and the waves rose even eight cubits. As for me, I seized a piece of wood, while those who were in the boat perished without one being left with me for three days. Behold me now before thee, for I was brought to this isle by a wave of the sea.'

"Then said he to me: 'Fear not, fear not, little one, and make not thy face sad. If thou hast come to me, it is God[1] who has let thee live. For it is he who has brought thee to this isle of the blest, where nothing is lacking, and which is filled with all good things. See now, thou shalt pass one month after another, until thou shalt be four months in this isle. Then a ship shall come from thy land with sailors, and thou shalt leave with them and go to thy country, and thou shalt die in thy town.

"'Converse is pleasing, and he who tastes of it passes over his misery. I will therefore tell thee of that which is in this isle. I am here with my brethren and my children around me; we are seventy-five serpents, children and kindred; without naming a young girl who was brought unto me by chance, and on whom the fire of heaven fell, and burnt her to ashes.

"'As for thee, if thou art strong, and if thy heart waits patiently, thou shalt press thy infants to thy bosom and embrace thy wife. Thou shalt return to thy house which is full of all good things, thou shalt see thy land, where thou shalt dwell in the midst of thy kindred!'

"Then I bowed, in my obeisance, and I touched the ground before him. 'Behold now that which I have told thee before. I shall tell of thy presence unto Pharaoh, I shall make him to know of thy greatness, and I will bring to thee of the sacred oils and perfumes, and of incense of the temples with which all gods are honoured. I shall tell, moreover, of that which I do now see (thanks to him), and there shall be rendered to thee praises before the fulness of all the land. I shall slay asses for thee in sacrifice, I shall pluck

[1] The polytheistic Egyptians frequently used the term *God* without specifying any particular deity: perhaps, too, in their own minds they did not define the idea, but applied it simply to some general notion of Divinity.—[ED.]

for thee the birds, and I shall bring for thee ships full of all kinds of the treasures of Egypt, as is comely to do unto a god, a friend of men in a far country, of which men know not.'

"Then he smiled at my speech, because of that which was in his heart, for he said to me: 'Thou art not rich in perfumes, for all that thou hast is but common incense. As for me, I am a prince of the land of Punt,[1] and I have perfumes. Only the oil which thou saidst thou wouldst bring is not common in this isle. But, when thou shalt depart from this place, thou shalt never more see this isle; it shall be changed into waves.'

"And behold, when the ship drew near, according to all that he had told me before, I got me up into an high tree, to strive to see those who were within it. Then I came and told to him this matter; but it was already known unto him before. Then he said to me: 'Farewell, farewell, go to thy house, little one, see again thy children, and let thy name be good in thy town; these are my wishes for thee!'

"Then I bowed myself before him, and held my arms low before him, and he, he gave me gifts of precious perfumes, of cassia, of sweet woods, of kohl, of cypress, an abundance of incense, of ivory tusks, of baboons, of apes, and all kinds of precious things. I embarked all in the ship which was come, and bowing myself, I prayed God for him.

"Then he said to me: 'Behold, thou shalt come to thy country in two months, thou shalt press to thy bosom thy children, and thou shalt rest in thy tomb!' After this I went down to the shore unto the ship, and I called to the sailors who were there. Then on the shore I rendered adoration to the master of this isle and to those who dwelt therein.

"When we shall come, in our return, to the house of Pharaoh, in the second month, according to all that the serpent has said, we shall approach unto the palace. And I shall go in before Pharaoh, I shall bring the gifts which I have brought from this isle into the country. Then he shall thank me before the fulness of all the land. Grant

[1] Punt was the "land of spices" to the Egyptian, and thence, too, the finest incense was brought for the temple services. It included Somaliland in Africa, and the south of Arabia.—[ED.]

then unto me a follower, and lead me to the courtiers of the King. Cast thine eye upon me after that I am come to land again, after that I have both seen and proved this. Hear my prayer, for it is good to listen to people. It was said unto me: 'Become a wise man, and thou shalt come to honour,' and behold I have become such."

This is finished from its beginning unto its end, even as it was found in a writing. It is written by the scribe of cunning fingers, Ameni-amen-aa; may he live in life, wealth, and health!

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

II

Greek (1000 B. C. TO 500 A. D.):

Early Greek:

* The Story of Œneus and Meleager, Homer, Iliad (about the 9th century B. C.).
* The Story of Ares and Aphrodite, Homer, Odyssey (about the 9th century B. C.).
* The Story of Polyphemus, Homer, Odyssey (about the 9th century B. C.).
* The Story of Pandora, Hesiod, Works and Days (about the 9th century B. C.).
* The Story of Prometheus, Hesiod, Theogony (about the 9th century B. C.).

The Story of Arion and the Dolphin, Herodotus, History (5th century B. C.).

The Story of Polycrates and the Ring, Herodotus, History (5th century B. C.).

The Story of Abradates and Panthea, Xenophon, Cyropædia (4th century B. C.).

The Island of Atlantis, Plato, Critias (4th century B. C.).

The Man Er's Visit to the Place of Departed Souls, Plato, Republic (4th century B. C.).

The Creation of Man, Plato, Timæus (4th century B. C.).

Late Greek:

Tales, Parthenius of Nicæa (1st century B. C.).

The Hunter of Eubœa, Dion Chrysostomus (1st century A. D.).

* The Fables of Æsop, Babrius (about the 3d century A. D.).

Cnemon's Story, Heliodorus, Æthiopica (about the 4th century A. D.).

Hebrew (ABOUT 450 B. C. TO THE TIME OF CHRIST):

The Book of Ruth, Bible (about 450 B. C.).
The Book of Jonah, Bible (about 300 B. C.).
Story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; Bible, The Book of Daniel (about 200 B. C.).
The Book of Esther, Bible (about 2d century B. C.).
The Book of Tobit, Bible, Apocrypha (about 2d century B. C.).
The Book of Judith, Bible, Apocrypha (about 2d century B. C.).
The History of Susanna, Bible, Apocrypha (about 1st century A. D.)
Bel and the Dragon, Bible, Apocrypha (about 1st century A. D.).

THE BOOK OF RUTH

THE BOOK OF RUTH

THE BOOK OF RUTH is a sequel to The Book of Judges, though in the Hebrew Canon it does not immediately follow it, as it does in English editions of the Bible, but forms part of the Hagiographa, or last division of the Canon. It serves to connect the period of the Judges with the monarchy, and supplies an important link in the ancestry of David. No certain date can be assigned for its authorship, but it was probably written long after the time of David. David reigned from about 1055 to 1015 B. C.; perhaps the nearest date assignable for the authorship of The Book of Ruth is about 450 B. C. But some authorities give it a still later date.

In regard to the literary character of The Book of Ruth, Richard G. Moulton says, in his introduction to Ruth in The Modern Reader's Bible:

"The Book of Ruth is the very ideal and type of the Idyl: so delicate in its transparent simplicity that the worst service one can do the story is to comment on it. Suffice it to say, that the warp and woof of the tale is a friendship between two women, and the grand climax up to which all is working is the birth of a baby. Instead of war, of national strife, of political struggle, we have here great harvest festivals, ceremonial transfers of land, family contingencies such as hard times and emigration, marriage, and the strange process by which an extinct family might be restored to the genealogies of Israel: such little things as are great to the little man of everyday life. Even in the little there are gradations: in this book are found such minutiæ as attentions shown to a shy

stranger girl at the harvest feast, petty contrivances for giving her unfair advantages in the gleaning field; details still more minute—how Ruth pockets the scraps at the feast to bring home to her mother-in-law, who has been sitting solitary at home while she herself has had the excitement of the harvesting. Trifles like these, fitted into their natural frame the Idyl, have kept afloat over some thirty centuries of time; and this story has done more to enable us to live over again in remote Hebrew antiquity than all the heroic achievements of Joshua and Judges put together."

Various objects have been suggested for The Book of Ruth: that it was written to give an account of David's ancestors; to enforce the obligation to marry a kinsman's widow; as a counterblast to Ezra's crusade against foreign wives. "But," suggests W. H. Bennett, "was any other motive necessary than the simple pleasure of telling a charming and edifying story?"

The version of The Book of Ruth here presented is the authorised, or King James, translation. But the descriptive chapter-headings have been omitted, and the verses merged in paragraphs; the punctuation has been somewhat modernised.

AUTHORITIES:

The Literary Study of the Bible, by Richard G. Moulton.

A Primer of the Bible, by W. H. Bennett.

An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, by Samuel R. Driver.

THE BOOK OF RUTH

I

Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-Judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law: Go, return each to her mother's house; the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice and wept. And they said unto her: Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. And Naomi said: Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say: I have hope; if I should have an husband also to-night, and should also bear sons, would ye tarry for them till they were grown?

would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said: Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people and unto her gods; return thou after thy sister-in-law. And Ruth said:

Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said: Is this Naomi? And she said unto them: Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me? So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

II

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi: Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her: Go, my daughter. And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech. And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers: The LORD be with you. And they answered him: The LORD bless thee. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers: Whose damsel is this?

And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said: It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab; and she said: I pray you, let me glean, and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, save that she tarried a little in the house. Then said Boaz unto Ruth: Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him: Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger? And Boaz answered and said unto her: It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Then she said: Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her: At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers; and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying: Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. So she gleaned in the field until even; and beat out that she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.

And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned; and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed. And her mother-in-law said unto her: Where hast

thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said: The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law: Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her: The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. And Ruth the Moabitess said: He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law: It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

III

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her: My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. And she said unto her: All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down. And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said: Who art thou? And she answered: I am Ruth thine handmaid; spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman. And he said: Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter; thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young

ıen, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; will do to thee all that thou requirest; for all the city of my eople doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now : is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsnan nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the norning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsnan, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not lo the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of ı kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth; lie down until the norning. And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she ·ose up before one could know another. And he said: Let it ıot be known that a woman came into the floor. Also he said: Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city. And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said: Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. And she said: These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said: Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law. Then said she: Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man will not rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

IV

Then Boaz went up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the near kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said: Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said: Sit ye down here. And they sat down. And he said unto the kinsman: Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: and I thought to advertise thee, saying: Buy it before them that sit here, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I nay know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I ım after thee. And he said: I will redeem it. Then said Boaz: What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, hou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the lead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. And the near kinsman said: I cannot redeem it for myself,

lest I mar mine own inheritance; redeem thou my right to thyself, for I cannot redeem it.

Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things: a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour; and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz: Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe. And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the peopl Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day. And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said: We are witnesses.

The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Beth-lehem: and let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi:

Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him.

And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying: There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, and Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

III

Latin (300 B. C. TO THE FALL OF ROME):

The Fable of the Tufted Lark, Ennius, Satires (3d century B. C.).
The City Mouse and the Country Mouse, Horace, Satires (1st century B. C.).
Metamorphoses, Ovid (1st century B. C.).
Fables, Phædrus (1st century A. D.).
Trimalchio's Banquet, Petronius Arbiter, Satires (1st century A. D.).
The Matron of Ephesus, Petronius Arbiter, Satires (1st century A. D.).
Letters, Pliny the Younger, Letters (1st century A. D.).
The Story of Cupid and Psyche, Lucius Apuleius, The Golden Ass (2d century A. D.).

Eastern Tale Collections:

The Buddhist Jataka (about 400 B. C.).
The Brahmanical Panchatantra (about 300 A. D.).
The Fables of Pilpay (8th century A. D.). These contain much material from the two preceding, and many of them passed into mediæval literature through the Directorium Vitæ Humanæ of John of Capua (1270).

THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

THE GOLDEN ASS, also called The Metamorphoses, ras written by Lucius Apuleius (born about 125 A. D.), nd was probably his earliest work. It imitated a portion f The Metamorphoses of Lucian; or perhaps rather, oth Lucian and Apuleius were indebted to an earlier riter, Lucius of Patræ. The best-known episode is that f Cupid and Psyche, founded on a popular legend or ıyth of Grecian origin. Some of the adventures of Don)uixote and of Gil Blas are drawn from The Golden Ass, nd Bocaccio has used many of the comic episodes. he author relates the story in his own person. His abbling in magic results in his transformation into an ss; in which form, however, he retains his human intelgence. As to the origin of the epithet *golden*, as applied o this romance, Dunlop says in his History of Prose iction:

"It's readers, on account of its excellence, as is genrally supposed, added the epithet of *golden*. Warburton, owever, conjectures, from the beginning of one of liny's epistles, that *Aureæ* (*golden*) was the common tle given to the Milesian, and such tales as strollers sed to tell for a piece of money to the rabble in a circle: Assem para et accipe auream fabulam.' These Milesian ıbles were much in vogue in the age of Apuleius."

The beautiful Story of Cupid and Psyche is in extreme ɔntrast with the body of the Golden Ass. Apuleius erfected this wild flower of ancient folk-lore into a perınial plant that has blossomed ever since along the ıths of literature and art. The story has been accepted

as a fitting embodiment of the struggle of the soul towards a higher perfection. It is not only its pleasing execution, it is the enduring beauty of the conception that has continued to fascinate. Hence we may say of The Golden Ass in its entirety, that whether readers are interested in esoteric meanings to be divined, or in the author's vivid sketches of his own period, the romance has a charm which long centuries have failed to dim.

The present rendering of The Story of Cupid and Psyche is a faithful reprint of the translation by Walter Pater, as given in the first edition of his Marius the Epicurean (1885).

AUTHORITIES:

A History of Latin Literature from Ennius to Boethius, by George A. Simcox.

History of Roman Literature, by Wilhelm Teuffel; revised and enlarged by Ludwig Schwabe.

Henry Wilson's annotated edition of John C. Dunlop's History of Prose Fiction.

THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

In a certain city lived a king and queen who had three daughters exceeding fair. But the beauty of the two elder, though pleasant to behold, yet passed not the measure of human praise, while such was the loveliness of the youngest that men's speech was too poor to command it worthily and could express it not at all. Many of the citizens and of strangers, whom the fame of this excellent vision had gathered thither, confounded by that matchless beauty, could but kiss the finger-tips of their right hands at sight of her, as in adoration to the goddess Venus herself. And soon a rumour passed through the country that she whom the blue deep had borne, forbearing her divine dignity, was even then moving among men, or that, by some fresh germination from the stars, not the sea now, but the earth, had put forth a new Venus, endued with the flower of virginity.

This belief, with the fame of the maiden's loveliness, went daily farther into distant lands, so that many people were drawn together to behold that glorious model of the age. Men sailed no longer to Paphos, to Cnidus or Cythera, to the presence of the goddess Venus; her sacred rites were neglected, her images stood uncrowned, the cold ashes were left to disfigure her forsaken altars. It was to a maiden that men's prayers were offered, to a human countenance they looked, in propitiating so great a godhead: when the girl went forth in the morning they strewed flowers on her way, and the victims proper to that unseen goddess were presented as she passed along. This conveyance of divine worship to a mortal kindled meantime the anger of the true Venus. "Lo! now the ancient parent of nature," she cried, "the fountain of all elements! Behold me, Venus, benign mother of the world, sharing my honours with a mortal maiden, while my name, built up in heaven, is profaned by the mean things of earth! Shall a perishable woman bear my image about with her? In vain did the shepherd of Ida prefer me!

Yet shall she have little joy, whosoever she be, of her usurped and unlawful loveliness!" Thereupon she called to her that winged, bold boy, of evil ways, who wanders armed by night through men's houses, spoiling their marriages; and stirring yet more by her speech his inborn wantonness, she led him to the city, and showed him Psyche as she walked.

"I pray thee," she said, "give thy mother a full revenge. Let this maid become the slave of an unworthy love." Then, embracing him closely, she departed to the shore and took her throne upon the crest of the wave. And lo! at her unuttered will, her ocean-servants are in waiting: the daughters of Nereus are there singing their song, and Portunus, and Salacia, and the tiny charioteer of the dolphin, with a host of Tritons leaping through the billows. And one blows softly his sounding sea-shell, another spreads a silken web against the sun, a third presents the mirror to the eyes of his mistress, while the others swim side by side below, drawing her chariot. Such was the escort of Venus as she went upon the sea.

Psyche meantime, aware of her loveliness, had no fruit thereof. All people regarded and admired, but none sought her in marriage. It was but as upon the finished work of the craftsman that they gazed upon that divine likeness. Her sisters, less fair than she, were happily wedded. She, even as a widow, sitting at home, wept over her desolation, hating in her heart the beauty in which all men were pleased.

And the king, supposing that the gods were angry, inquired of the oracle of Apollo, and Apollo answered him thus: "Let the damsel be placed on the top of a certain mountain, adorned as for the bed of marriage and of death. Look not for a son-in-law of mortal birth; but for that evil serpent-thing, by reason of whom even the gods tremble and the shadows of Styx are afraid."

So the king returned home and made known the oracle to his wife. For many days she lamented, but at last the fulfilment of the divine precept was urgent upon her, and the company was made ready to conduct the maiden to her deadly bridal. And now the nuptial torch gathers dark smoke and ashes; the pleasant sound of the pipe changes into a cry; the marriage hymn concludes in a sorrowful wailing. Below her yellow wedding-veil the bride shook away her tears; in-

somuch that the whole city was afflicted together at the ill-luck of the stricken house.

But the mandate of the god impelled the hapless Psyche to her fate, and, those solemnities being ended, the funeral of the living soul goes forth, all the people following. Psyche, bitterly weeping, assists not at her marriage but at her own obsequies, and while the parents hesitate to accomplish a thing so unholy the daughter cries to them: "Wherefore torment your luckless age by long weeping? This was the prize of my extraordinary beauty! When all people celebrated us with divine honours, and with one voice named the *New Venus*, it was then ye should have wept for me as one dead. Now at last I understand that that one name of Venus has been my ruin. Lead me and set me upon the appointed place. I am in haste to submit to that well-omened marriage, to behold that goodly spouse. Why delay the coming of him who was born for the destruction of the whole world?"

She was silent, and with firm step went on the way. And they proceeded to the appointed place on a steep mountain, and left there the maiden alone, and took their way homeward dejectedly. The wretched parents, in their close-shut house, yielded themselves to perpetual night; while to Psyche, fearful and trembling and weeping sore upon the mountain-top, comes the gentle Zephyrus. He lifts her gently, and, with vesture floating on either side, bears her by his own soft breathing over the windings of the hills, and sets her lightly among the flowers in the bosom of a valley below.

Psyche, in those delicate grassy places, lying sweetly on her dewy bed, rested from the agitation of her soul and arose in peace. And lo! a grove of mighty trees, with a fount of water, clear as glass, in the midst; and hard by the water, a dwelling-place, built not by human hands but by some divine cunning. One recognised, even at the entering, the delightful hostelry of a god. Golden pillars sustained the roof, arched most curiously in cedar-wood and ivory. The walls were hidden under wrought silver, all tame and woodland creatures leaping forward to the visitor's gaze. Wonderful indeed was the craftsman, divine or half divine, who by the subtlety of his art had breathed so wild a soul into the silver! The very pavement was distinct with pictures in goodly stones. In the glow of its precious metal the house is its own daylight, hav-

ing no need of the sun. Well might it seem a place fashioned for the conversation of gods with men!

Psyche, drawn forward by the delight of it, came near, and, her courage growing, stood within the doorway. One by one, she admired the beautiful things she saw; and, most wonderful of all! no lock, no chain, nor living guardian protected that great treasure-house. But as she gazed there came a voice—a voice, as it were, unclothed of its bodily vesture. "Mistress!" it said, "all these things are thine. Lie down, and relieve thy weariness, and rise again for the bath when thou wilt. We thy servants, whose voice thou hearest, will be beforehand with our service, and a royal feast shall be ready."

And Psyche understood that some divine care was providing, and, refreshed with sleep and the bath, sat down to the feast. Still she saw no one: only she heard words falling here and there, and had voices alone to serve her. And the feast being ended, one entered the chamber and sang to her unseen, while another struck the chords of a harp, invisible with him who played on it. Afterwards the sound of a company singing together came to her, but still so that none was present to sight; yet it appeared that a great multitude of singers was there.

And the hour of evening inviting her, she climbed into the bed; and as the night was far advanced, behold, a sound of a certain clemency approaches her. Then, fearing for her maidenhood, in so great solitude, she trembled, and more than any evil she knew dreaded that she knew not. And now the husband, that unknown husband, drew near, and ascended the couch, and made her his wife; and lo! before the rise of dawn he had departed hastily. And the attendant voices ministered to the needs of the newly married. And so it happened with her for a long season. And as nature has willed, that new thing, by continual use, became a delight to her, and the sound of the voice grew to be her solace in that condition of loneliness and uncertainty.

One night the bridegroom spoke thus to his beloved: "O Psyche, most pleasant bride! Fortune has grown stern with us, and threatens thee with mortal peril. Thy sisters, troubled at the report of thy death and seeking some trace of thee, will come to the mountain-top. But if by chance their cries

reach thee, answer not, neither look forth at all, lest thou bring sorrow upon me and destruction upon thyself." Then Psyche promised that she would do according to his will. But the bridegroom had fled away again with the night. And all that day she spent in tears, repeating that she was now dead indeed, shut up in that golden prison; powerless to console her sisters, sorrowing after her, or to see their faces: and so went to rest weeping.

And after a while came the bridegroom again, and lay down beside her, and embracing her as she wept, complained: "Was this thy promise, my Psyche? What have I to hope from thee? Even in the arms of thy husband thou ceasest not from pain. Do now as thou wilt. Indulge thine own desire, though it seeks what will ruin thee. Yet wilt thou remember my warning, repentant too late." Then, protesting that she is like to die, she obtains from him that he suffer her to see her sisters, and to present to them moreover what gifts she would of golden ornaments; but therewith he oft-times advised her never at any time, yielding to pernicious counsel, to inquire concerning his bodily form, lest she fall, through unholy curiosity, from so great a height of fortune, nor feel ever his embrace again. "I would die a hundred times," she said, cheerful at last, "rather than be deprived of thy most sweet usage. I love thee as my own soul, beyond comparison even with Love himself. Only bid thy servant Zephyrus bring hither my sisters, as he brought me. My honey-comb! My husband! Thy Psyche's breath of life!" So he promised; and after the embraces of the night, ere the light appeared, vanished from the hands of his bride.

And the sisters, coming to the place where Psyche had been abandoned, wept loudly among the rocks, and called upon her by name, so that the sound came down to her, and running out of the palace distraught, she cried: "Wherefore afflict your souls with lamentations? I whom you mourn am here." Then summoning Zephyrus, she reminded him of her husband's bidding; and he bare them down with a gentle blast. "Enter now," she said, "into my house, and relieve your sorrow in the company of Psyche your sister."

And Psyche displayed to them all the treasures of the golden house, and its great family of ministering voices, nursing in them the malice which was already at their hearts.

And at last one of them asks curiously who the lord of that celestial array may be, and what manner of man her husband? And Psyche answered dissemblingly: "A young man, handsome and mannerly, with a goodly beard. For the most part he hunts upon the mountains." And lest the secret should slip from her in the way of further speech, loading her sisters with gold and gems, she summoned Zephyrus to bear them away.

And they returned home, on fire with envy. "See now the injustice of fortune!" cried one. "We, the elder children, have been given like servants to be the wives of strangers, while the youngest is possessed of so great riches, who scarcely knows how to use them. You saw, sister! what a hoard of wealth is lying in the house; what glittering gowns; what splendour of precious gems, besides all that gold trodden under foot. If she indeed hath, as she said, a bridegroom so goodly, then no one in all the world is happier. And it may be that that husband, being of divine nature, will make her too a goddess. Nay! so in truth it is. It was even thus she bore herself. Already she looks aloft and breathes divinity; who, but a woman, has pure voices for her handmaidens, and can command the winds." "Think," answered the other, "how arrogantly she dealt with us, grudging us these trifling gifts out of all that store, and when she found our company a burden, causing us to be hissed and driven away from her through the air! But I am no woman if she keep her hold on this great fortune: and if the insult done us has touched thee too, take we counsel together. Meanwhile let us hold our peace, and know nought of her, alive or dead. For they are not truly happy of whose happiness other folk are unaware."

And the bridegroom, whom still she knows not, warns her thus a second time, as he talks with her by night: "Seest thou what peril besets thee? Those cunning wolves have made ready for thee their snares, of which the sum is that they persuade thee to search into the fashion of my countenance, the seeing of which, as I have told thee often, will be the seeing of it no more forever. But do thou neither listen nor make answer to aught regarding thy husband. Besides, we have sown also the seed of our race. Even now this bosom grows with a child to be born to us, a child, if thou

but keep our secret, of divine quality; if thou profane it, subject to death." And Psyche was glad at the tidings, rejoicing in that solace of a divine seed, and in the glory of that pledge of love to be, and the dignity of the name of mother. Anxiously she noted the increase of the days, the waning months. And again, as he tarries briefly beside her, the bridegroom repeats his warning: "Even now the sword is drawn with which thy sisters seek thy life. Have pity on thyself, sweet wife, and upon our child, and see not those evil women again." But the sisters made their way once more into the palace and cried to her in wily tones: "O Psyche! and thou too wilt be a mother! How great will be the joy at home! Happy indeed shall we be to have the nursing of the golden child. Truly if he does but answer duly to the beauty of his parents, it will be a birth of Cupid himself."

So, little by little, they stole upon the soul of their sister. She, meanwhile, bids the lyre to sound for their delight and the playing is heard. She bids the pipes to move and the quire to sing, and the music and the singing come invisibly, soothing the mind of the listener with sweetest modulation. But not even thereby was their malice put to sleep: once more they seek to know what manner of husband she has, and whence that seed. And Psyche, simple overmuch, forgetting her first story, answers: "My husband comes from a far country, trading for great sums. He is already of middle age, with whitening locks." And therewith she dismisses them again.

And returning home upon the soft breath of Zephyrus one cried to the other: "What shall be said of so ugly a lie? He who was a young man with florid beard is now in middle life. It must be that she told a false tale: else is she indeed ignorant what manner of man that is. Howsoever it be, let us destroy her quickly. For if she indeed knows not, be sure that her bridegroom is one of the gods; it is a god she bears in her womb. And let that be far from us! If she be called mother of a god, then will my life be more than I can bear."

So, full of rage against her, they returned to Psyche, and said to her craftily: "Thou livest in an ignorant bliss, all incurious of thy real danger. It is a deadly serpent, as we certainly know, that comes to sleep by thy side. Remember the words of the oracle, which declared thee destined to a

cruel beast. There are those who have seen it at nightfall, coming back from its feeding. It will not be much longer, they say, ere it will end its blandishments. It but waits for the babe to be formed in thee, that it may devour thee by so much the richer. If indeed the solitude of this musical place, or it may be the loathsome commerce of this hidden love, delight thee, we at least with sisterly piety have done our part." And at last the unhappy Psyche, so simple and frail of soul, was carried away by the terror of their words, and losing memory of her husband's precepts and her own promise, brought upon herself a great calamity. Trembling and turning pale, she answers them: "And they who tell those things, it may be, speak the truth. For in very deed never have I seen the face of my husband, nor know I at all what manner of man he is. Always he frights me diligently from the sight of him, threatening some great evil should I too curiously look upon his face. Do ye, if ye can help your sister in her great peril, stand by her now."

Her sisters answered her: "The way of safety we have well considered, and will teach thee. Take a sharp knife, and hide it in that part of the couch where thou art wont to lie; take also a lamp filled with oil, and set it privily behind the curtain. And when he shall have drawn up his coils into the accustomed place, and thou hearest him breathe in sleep, slip then from his side and discover the lamp, and, knife in hand, put forth all thy strength, and strike off the serpent's head." And so they departed in haste.

And Psyche left alone (alone but for the furies which beset her) is tossed up and down in her distress, like a wave of the sea; and though her will is firm, yet, in the moment of putting hand to the deed, she falters, and is torn asunder by various apprehension of that great calamity upon her. She hastens and anon delays; is now full of distrust, and now of angry courage: under one bodily form she loathes the monster, and loves the bridegroom. But evening ushers in the night; and at last in haste she makes ready for the terrible deed. Darkness came, and the bridegroom; and he first, after some faint essay of love, fell into a deep sleep.

And she, erewhile of no strength, the hard purpose of destiny assisting her, is confirmed in force. With lamp plucked forth, and the knife in her hand, she put by her sex; and lo!

as the secrets of the bed became manifest, the sweetest and most gentle of all creatures, Cupid himself, reclined there, in his own proper loveliness! At the sight of him the very flame of the lamp kindled more gladly! But Psyche was afraid at the vision, and, faint of soul, trembled backward upon her knees, and would have hidden away the steel in her own bosom. But the knife slipped from her hand: and now, undone, yet ofttimes looking upon the beauty of that divine countenance, she lives again. She sees the locks of that golden head, pleasant with the unction of the gods, shed down in graceful entanglement behind and before, about the ruddy cheeks and white throat. The pinions of the winged god, yet fresh with the dew, are spotless upon his shoulders, the delicate plumage wavering over them as they lie at rest. Smooth he was, and, touched with light, worthy of Venus his mother. At the foot of the couch lay his bow and arrows, the instruments of his power, propitious to men.

And Psyche, gazing hungrily upon all that, drew an arrow from the quiver, and trying its point upon her thumb, tremulous still, drave in the barb, so that a drop of blood came forth. Thus fell she, by her own act, and unaware, into the love of Love. Falling upon the bridegroom, with indrawn breath and a hurry of kisses from her eager and open lips, she shuddered as she thought how brief that sleep might be. And it chanced that a drop of burning oil fell from the lamp upon the god's shoulder. Ah! maladroit minister of love, thus to wound him from whom all fire comes; though 't was a lover, I trow, first devised thee, to have the fruit of his desire even in the darkness! At the touch of the fire the god started up, and beholding the overflow of her faith, quietly took flight from her embraces.

And Psyche, as he rose upon the wing, laid hold on him with her two hands, and hung upon him in his passage through the air, till she sank to the earth through weariness. And as she lay there, the divine lover, tarrying still, lighted upon a cypress-tree which grew near, and, from the top of it, spake thus to her, in great emotion: "Foolish one! unmindful of the command of Venus, my mother, who had devoted thee to the bed of one of base degree, I fled to thee in his stead. Now know I that that was vainly done. Into mine own flesh pierced mine arrow, and I made thee my

wife, only that I might seem a monster beside thee—that thou shouldst seek to wound the head wherein lay the eyes so full of love to thee! Again and again, I thought to put thee on thy guard concerning these things, and warned thee in loving kindness. Now I would but punish thee by my flight hence." And therewith he winged his way into the deep sky.

Psyche, prostrate upon the earth, and following far as sight might reach the flight of the bridegroom, wept and lamented; and when the breadth of space had parted him wholly from her, cast herself down from the bank of a river which was near. But the stream, turning gentle in honour of the god, put her forth again unhurt upon its margin. And as it happened, Pan, the rustic god, was sitting just then by the waterside, embracing, in the body of a reed, the goddess Canna; teaching her to respond to him in all varieties of slender sound. Hard by, his flock of goats browsed at will. And the shaggy god called her, wounded and outworn, kindly to him and said: "I am but a rustic herdsman, pretty maiden, yet wise, by favour of my great age and long experience; and, if I guess truly by those faltering steps, by thy sorrowful eyes and continual sighing, thou labourest with excess of love. Listen then to me, and seek not death again, in the stream or otherwise. Put aside thy woe and turn thy prayers to Cupid. He is in truth a delicate youth: win him by the delicacy of thy service."

So the shepherd-god spoke, and Psyche, answering nothing, but with a reverence to his serviceable deity, went on her way. And while she, in her search after Cupid, wandered through many lands, he was lying in the chamber of his mother, heart-sick. And the white bird which floats over the waves plunged in haste into the sea, and approaching Venus as she bathed, made known to her that her son lies afflicted with some grievous hurt, doubtful of life. And Venus cried, angrily: "My son, then, has a mistress! And it is Psyche, who witched away my beauty and was the rival of my godhead, whom he loves!"

Therewith she issued from the sea, and returning to her golden chamber, found there the lad, sick, as she had heard, and cried from the doorway: "Well done, truly! to trample thy mother's precepts under foot, to spare my enemy that

cross of an unworthy love; nay, unite her to thyself, child as thou art, that I might have a daughter-in-law who hates me! I will make thee repent of thy sport, and the savour of thy marriage bitter. There is one who shall chasten that body of thine, put out thy torch and unstring thy bow. Not till she has plucked forth that hair, into which so oft these hands have smoothed the golden light, and sheared away thy wings, shall I feel the injury done me avenged." And with that she hastened in anger from the doors.

And Ceres and Juno met her, and sought to know the meaning of her troubled countenance. "Ye come in season," she cried; "I pray you, find for me Psyche. It must needs be that ye have heard the disgrace of my house." And they, ignorant of what was done, would have soothed her anger, saying: "What fault, Mistress! hath thy son committed, that thou wouldst destroy the girl he loves? Knowest thou not that he is now of age? Because he wears his years so lightly must he seem to thee ever but a child? Wilt thou forever thus pry into the pastimes of thy son, always accusing his wantonness, and blaming in him those delicate wiles which are all thine own?" Thus, in secret fear of the boy's bow, did they seek to please him with their gracious patronage. But Venus, angry at their light taking of her wrongs, turned her back upon them; and with hasty steps took her way once more to the sea.

And in the meanwhile, Psyche, tossed in soul, wandering hither and thither, rested not night nor day, in the pursuit of her husband, desiring, if she might not soothe his anger by the endearments of a wife, at the least to propitiate him with the prayers of a handmaid. And seeing a certain temple on the top of a high mountain, she said: "Who knows whether yonder place be not the abode of my lord?" Thither, therefore, she turned her steps; hastening now the more because desire and hope pressed her on, weary as she was with the labours of the way; and so, painfully measuring out the highest ridges of the mountain, she drew near to the sacred couches. She sees ears of wheat, in heaps or twisted into chaplets; ears of barley also; and there were sickles and all the instruments of harvest, lying there in disorder, thrown at random from the hands of the labourers in the great heat. These she curiously sets apart, one by one, duly ordering

them; for she said within herself: "I may not neglect the shrines, nor the holy service, of any god there be, but must rather win by supplication the kindly mercy of them all."

And Ceres found her as she bent sadly on her task, and cried aloud: "Alas, Psyche! Venus, in the furiousness of her anger, tracks thy footsteps through the world, seeking for thee to pay her the utmost penalty; and thou, thinking of anything rather than thine own safety, hast taken on thee the care of what belongs to me!" Then Psyche fell down at her feet, and sweeping the floor with her hair, and washing the footsteps of the goddess with her tears, besought her mercy, with many prayers: "By the gladdening rites of harvest, by the lighted lamps and mystic marches of the Marriage and mysterious Invention of thy daughter Proserpine, and by all beside that the holy place of Attica veils in silence, minister, I pray thee, to the sorrowful heart of Psyche! Suffer me to hide myself but for a few days among the heaps of corn, till time has softened the anger of the goddess, and my strength, outworn in my long travail, be recovered by a little rest."

But Ceres answered her: "Truly thy tears move me, and I would fain help thee; only I dare not incur the ill-will of my kinswoman. Depart hence as quickly as may be." And Psyche, repelled against hope, and afflicted now with two-fold sorrow, making her way back again, beheld among the half-lighted woods of the valley below a sanctuary builded with cunning art. And that she might lose no way of hope, howsoever doubtful, she drew near to the sacred doors. She sees there gifts of price and garments fixed upon the doorposts and to the branches of the trees, wrought with letters of gold which told the name of the goddess to whom they were dedicated, with thanksgiving for that she had done. So, with bent knee and hands laid about the glowing altar, she prayed, saying: "Sister and spouse of Jupiter! be thou to these my desperate fortunes, Juno the Auspicious! I know that thou dost willingly help those in travail with child; deliver me from the peril that is upon me." And as she prayed thus, Juno in the majesty of her godhead was straightway present, and answered: "Would that I might incline favourably to thee; but against the will of Venus, whom I have ever loved as a daughter, I may not, for very shame, grant thy prayer."

And Psyche, dismayed by this new shipwreck of her hope, communed thus with herself, "Whither, from the midst of the snares that beset me, shall I take my way once more? In what dark solitude shall I hide me from the all-seeing eye of Venus? What if I put on at length a man's courage, and yielding myself unto her as my mistress, soften by a humility not yet too late the fierceness of her purpose? Who knows but that I may find him also whom my soul seeketh after, in the abode of his mother?"

And Venus, renouncing all earthly aid in her search, prepared to return to heaven. She ordered the chariot to be made ready, which Vulcan had wrought for her as a marriage-gift, with a cunning of hand which left his work so much the richer by the weight of gold it had lost under his tool. From the multitude which housed about the bedchamber of their mistress, white doves came forth, and with joyful motions bent their painted necks beneath the yoke. Behind it, with playful riot, the sparrows sped onward, with other birds sweet of song, making known by their soft notes the approach of the goddess. Eagle and cruel hawk alarmed not the quireful family of Venus. And the clouds broke away, as the uttermost ether opened to receive her, daughter and goddess, with great joy.

And Venus passed straightway to the house of Jupiter to beg of him the use of Mercury, the god of speech. And Jupiter refused not her prayer. And Venus and Mercury descended from heaven together; and as they went, the former said to the latter, "Thou knowest, my brother of Arcady, that never at any time have I done anything without thy help; for how long time, moreover, I have sought a certain maiden in vain. And now nought remains but that, by thy heraldry, I proclaim a reward for whomsoever shall find her. Do thou my bidding quickly." And with that she conveyed to him a little scrip, in the which was written the name of Psyche, with other things; and so returned home.

And Mercury failed not in his office; but departing into all lands, proclaimed that whosoever should deliver up to Venus the fugitive girl, should receive from herself seven kisses—one thereof full of the inmost honey of her throat. With that the doubt of Psyche was ended. And now, as she came near to the doors of Venus, one of the household, whose

name was Use-and-Wont, ran out to her, crying: "Hast thou learned, Wicked Maid! now at last! that thou hast a mistress?" and seizing her roughly by the hair, drew her into the presence of Venus. And when Venus saw her, she cried out, saying: "Thou hast deigned then to make thy salutations to thy mother-in-law. Now will I in turn treat thee as becometh a dutiful daughter-in-law!"

And she took barley and millet and poppy seed, every kind of grain and seed, and mixed them together, and laughed, and said to her: "Methinks so plain a maiden can earn lovers only by industrious ministry: now will I also make trial of thy service. Sort me this heap of seed, the one kind from the others, grain by grain; and get thy task done before the evening." And Psyche, stunned by the cruelty of her bidding, was silent, and moved not her hand to the inextricable heap. And there came forth a little ant, which had understanding of the difficulty of her task, and took pity upon the consort of the god of Love: and he ran deftly hither and thither, and called together the whole army of his fellows. "Have pity," he cried, "nimble scholars of the Earth, Mother of all things! have pity upon the wife of Love, and hasten to help her in her perilous effort." Then, one upon the other, the hosts of the insect people hurried together; and they sorted asunder the whole heap of seed, separating every grain after its kind, and so departed quickly out of sight.

And at nightfall Venus returned, and seeing that task finished with so wonderful diligence, she cried: "The work is not thine, thou naughty maid, but his in whose eyes thou hast found favour." And calling her again in the morning, "See now the grove," she said, "beyond yonder torrent. Certain sheep feed there, whose fleeces shine with gold. Fetch me straightway a lock of that precious stuff, having gotten it as thou mayst."

And Psyche went forth willingly, not to obey the command of Venus, but even to seek a rest from her labour in the depths of the river. But out of the river, the green reed, lowly mother of music, spake to her: "O Psyche, pollute not these waters by thy destruction, and approach not that terrible flock; for, as the heat groweth, they wax fierce: lie down under yon plane-tree, till the quiet of the river's breath have soothed them. Thereafter thou mayst shake down the

fleecy gold from the trees of the grove, for it holdeth by the leaves."

And Psyche, instructed thus by the simple reed, in the humanity of its heart, filled her bosom with the soft golden stuff, and returned to Venus. But the goddess smiled bitterly, and said to her: "Well know I who was the author of this thing also. I will make further trial of thy discretion, and the boldness of thy heart. Seest thou the utmost peak of yonder steep mountain? The dark stream which flows down thence waters the Stygian fields, and swells the stream of Cocytus. Bring me now, in this little urn, a draft from its innermost source." And therewith she put into her hands a vessel of wrought crystal.

And Psyche set forth in haste on her way to the mountain, looking there at last to find the end of her hapless life. But when she came to the region which borders on the cliff pointed out to her, she understood the deadly nature of her task. From a great rock, steep and slippery, a horrible river of water poured forth, falling straightway down a channel exceeding narrow into the unseen gulf below. And lo! creeping from the rocks on either hand, angry serpents, with their long necks and sleepless eyes. The very waters found a voice and bade her depart, in smothered cries of: *Depart hence!* and ***What doest thou here?*** *Look around thee!* and *Destruction is upon thee!* And then sense left her, in the immensity of her peril, as one changed to stone.

But not even then did the distress of that innocent soul escape the steady eyes of a gentle providence. For the bird of Jupiter spread his wings and took flight to her, and asked her: "Didst thou think, simple one, even thou! that thou couldst steal one drop of that relentless stream, the most holy river of Styx, terrible even to the gods? But give me thine urn." And the bird took the urn, and filled it at the source, and returned to her quickly from among the teeth of the serpents, bringing with him of the waters, all unwilling—nay! warning him to depart away and not molest them.

And she, receiving the urn with great joy, ran back quickly that she might deliver it to Venus, and yet again satisfied not the angry goddess. "My child!" she said, "in this one thing further must thou serve me. Take now this tiny casket, and get thee down even unto hell, and deliver it

to Proserpine. Tell her that Venus would have of her beauty, so much at least as may suffice for but one day's use; that beauty she possessed erewhile being foreworn and spoiled, through her tendance upon the sick-bed of her son; and be not slow in returning."

And Psyche perceived there the last ebbing of her fortune—that she was now thrust openly upon death, who must go down, of her own motion, to Hades and the Shades. And straightway she climbed to the top of an exceeding high tower, thinking within herself: "I will cast myself down thence; so shall I descend most quickly into the kingdom of the dead." And the tower, again, broke forth into speech: "Wretched Maid! Wretched Maid! Wilt thou destroy thyself? If the breath quit thy body, then wilt thou indeed go down into Hades, but by no means return hither. Listen to me. Among the pathless wilds not far from this place lies a certain mountain, and therein one of hell's vent-holes. Through the yawning breach a rough way lies open, following which thou wilt come, by direct course, to the castle of Orcus. And thou must not go empty-handed. Take in each hand a morsel of barley-bread, soaked in hydromel; and in thy mouth two pieces of money. And when thou shalt be now well onward in the way of death, thou wilt overtake a lame ass laden with wood, and a lame driver, who will beg thee to reach him certain cords to fasten the burden which is falling from the ass; but be thou cautious to pass on in silence. And soon as thou comest to the river of the dead, Charon, in that crazy bark he hath, will put thee over upon the farther side. There is greed even among the dead: and thou shalt deliver to him, for the ferrying, one of those two pieces of money, in such wise that he take it with his hand from between thy lips. And as thou passest over the stream, a dead old man, rising on the water, will put up to thee his mouldering hands, and pray thee to draw him into the ferry-boat. But beware that thou yield not to unlawful pity.

"When thou hast crossed, and art upon the causeway, certain aged women, spinning, will cry to thee to lend thy hand to their work: and beware again that thou take no part therein; for this also is the snare of Venus, whereby she would cause thee to cast away one at least of those cakes thou bearest in thy hands. And think not that a slight mat-

ter; for the loss of either one of them will be to thee the losing of the light of day. For a watch-dog exceeding fierce lies ever before the threshold of that lonely house of Proserpine. Close his mouth with one of thy cakes; so shalt thou pass by him, and enter straightway into the presence of Proserpine herself. Then, do thou deliver thy message, and taking what she shall give thee, return back again; offering to the watch-dog the other cake, and to the ferryman that other piece of money thou holdest in thy mouth. After this manner mayst thou return again beneath the stars. But withal, I charge thee, think not to look into, nor open, the casket thou bearest, with that treasure of the beauty of the divine countenance hidden therein."

So spake the stones of the tower; and Psyche delayed not, but proceeding diligently after the manner enjoined, entered into the house of Proserpine, at whose feet she sat down humbly, and would neither the delicate couch nor that divine food which the goddess offered her, but did straightway the business of Venus. And Proserpine filled the casket secretly, and shut the lid, and delivered it to Psyche, who fled therewith from Hades with new strength. But coming back into the light of day, even as she hasted now to the ending of her service, she was seized by a rash curiosity. "Lo! now," she said within herself, "my simpleness! who bearing in my hands the divine loveliness, heed not to touch myself with a particle at least therefrom, that I may please the more by the fervour of it, my fair one, my beloved!" Even as she spoke, she lifted the lid; and behold! within, neither beauty, nor anything beside, save sleep only, the sleep of the dead, which took hold upon her, filling all her members with its drowsy vapour, so that she lay down in the way and moved not, as in the slumber of death.

And Cupid, his wound being now healed, because he would endure no longer the absence of her he loved, gliding through the narrow window of the chamber wherein he was holden, his pinions being now repaired with a little rest, fled forth swiftly upon them; and coming to the place where Psyche was, shook that sleep away from her, and set him in his prison again, awaking her with the innocent point of his arrow. "Lo! now, thine old error again," he said to her, "which had like once more to have destroyed thee! But do

thou now what is lacking of the command of my mother the rest shall be my care." With these words, the lover rose upon the air; and being consumed inwardly with the greatness of his love, penetrated with vehement wing into the highest place of heaven, to lay his cause before the father of the gods. And the father of gods took his hand in his, and kissed his face, and said to him: "At no time, my son, has thou regarded me with due honour. Often hast thou vexed my bosom, wherein lies the disposition of the stars, with those busy darts of thine. Nevertheless, because thou hast grown up between these mine hands, I will accomplish thy desire." And straightway he bade Mercury to call the gods together; and, the council-chamber being filled, sitting upon a high throne: "Ye gods," he said, "all ye whose names are in the white book of the Muses, ye know yonder lad. It seems good to me that his youthful heats should by some means be restrained. And that all occasion may be taken from him, I would even confine him in the bonds of marriage. He has chosen and embraced a mortal maiden. Let him have fruit of her love, and possess her forever."

And thereupon he bade Mercury produce Psyche in heaven; and holding out to her his ambrosial cup, "Take it," he said, "and live forever: nor shall Cupid ever depart from thee." And the gods sat down together to the marriage-feast. On the first couch lay the bridegroom, and Psyche in his bosom. His rustic serving-boy bare the wine to Jupiter; and Bacchus to the rest. The Seasons crimsoned all things with their roses. Apollo sang to the lyre, while a little Pan prattled on his reeds, and Venus danced very sweetly to the soft music. Thus, with due rites, did Psyche pass into the power of Cupid; and from them was born the daughter whom men call Voluptas.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

IV

Medieval Literature (END OF CLASSICAL PERIOD TO RENAISSANCE):

Sagas:

Old English:

*The Story of Sigemund, Beowulf (about the 7th century).
*Waldere (8th century).
*The Battle of Finnsburg (8th century).
*The Battle of Brunanburh (10th century).

Icelandic:

Thor's Adventures, and other tales: The Younger Edda (12th century).
The Tale of Hogni and Hedinn (12th century or earlier).
Gunnlawg the Worm-Tongue (13th century).
Frithiof the Bold (14th century).
Roi the Fool (about the 14th century).
Viglund the Fair (15th century).

Lais (ABOUT THE 12TH CENTURY):

*Le Cor, Robert Biket.
*Lanval, Marie de France.
*Ywenec, Marie de France.
*Le Fresne, Marie de France.
*Eliduc, Marie de France.
*Le Bisclaveret, Marie de France.
*Milun, Marie de France.
*Le Chèvrefeuille, Marie de France.
*Orfeo and Heurodis.

Fabliaux (FROM THE 12TH TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 14TH CENTURY):

*Richeut (about 1156).
*Estula.
*Le Vair Palefroi, Huon le Roi.
*Barat et Haimet, Jean Bedel.
*La Veuve, Gautier le Long.
*Charlot le Juif, Rustebeuf.
*La Bourse Pleine de Sens, Jean le Galois d'Aubepierre.
*La Housse Partie, Bernier.

* Le Clerc Caché, Jean de Condé.
* Dame Siriz (13th century).

Beast-Tales:

* Ysopet, Marie de France (12th century).
* The cycle of Le Roman du Renart (12th century).
* Fables, Robert Henryson (15th century).

Religious Collections and Contes Dévots:

Vitæ Patrum (Lives of the Fathers) (5th century).
Gregory's Dialogues (6th century).
* Miracles de Nostre Dame, Gautier de Coinci (1236).
* Le Tombeur de Nostre Dame (12th or 13th century).
* L'Ange et l'Ermite (12th or 13th century).
Legenda Aurea (The Golden Legend), Jacobus a Voragiñe (13th century).

Collections of Exampla:

The Exempla of Jaques de Vitry (12th century).
Gesta Romanorum (Deeds of the Romans) (about the fourteenth century).

Short Romances of Adventure in Prose:

Aucassin et Nicolette (12th century).
Jehan de Paris (15th century).

Tale Collections drawn from Eastern Sources:

* Les Sept Sages (in French, in the 12th century).
Disciplina Clericalis (Rules for the Clergy), Petrus Alphonsi (12th century).
* Barlaam et Joasaph (in French, in the form of a saint's legend, by the 13th century).
Directorium Vitæ Humanæ (Guide for Human Life), John of Capua (1270).

Tale Collections of a Somewhat More Original Character:

Il Novellino (about the end of the 13th century).
Il Decamerone, Giovanni Boccaccio (1353).
* Confessio Amantis, John Gower (1383).
* The Canterbury Tales, Geoffrey Chaucer (about 1387).
Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, Antoine de la Sale (1462).

FREDERICK OF THE ALBERIGHI AND HIS FALCON

FREDERICK OF THE ALBERIGHI AND HIS FALCON

FREDERICK OF THE ALBERIGHI AND HIS FALCON is a story from The Decameron, a famous collection of one hundred tales by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375), published in 1353, and written a few years earlier. Of these tales, ten are represented as told each day for ten days, in a garden near Florence, during the plague of 1348. Frederick is the ninth story of the fifth day. Preceding the stories is a masterly description of the plague at Florence; the tales themselves range from the pathetic to the grossly licentious.

Of Frederick it has been remarked, that "as a picture of the habitual workings of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost entirely on itself, without the violent excitement of opposing duties or untoward circumstances, nothing ever came up to the story of Frederick and His Falcon. The perseverance in attachment, the spirit of gallantry and generosity displayed in it, has no parallel in the history of heroical sacrifices. The feeling is so unconscious, too, and involuntary, is brought out in such small, unlooked-for, and unostentatious circumstances, as to show it to have been woven into the very nature and soul of the author."

Of the character of the tales it may be said that, while some of them are indelicate to modern taste, the best of them, such as Frederick, Griselda, The Stone of Invisibility, The Pot of Basil, The Jew Abraham Converted to Christianity by the Immorality of the Clergy, are stories which belong to all subsequent times, as they may have belonged to the ages before.

Many of the English translations of The Decameron are inaccurate. The present version of Frederick of the Alberighi and His Falcon is by W. J. Stillman.

AUTHORITIES:

Giovanni Boccaccio as Man and Author, by John Addington Symonds.

Henry Wilson's annotated edition of John C. Dunlop's History of Prose Fiction.

A History of Italian Literature, by Richard Garnett (Literatures of the World series).

FREDERICK OF THE ALBERIGHI AND HIS FALCON

You must know that Coppo di Borghese Domenchini—who was in our city, and perhaps still is, a man of reverence and of great authority amongst us, both for his opinions and for his virtues, and much more for the nobility of his family, being distinguished and wealthy and of enduring reputation, being full of years and experience—was often delighted to talk with his neighbours and others of the things of the past, which he, better than anybody else, could do with excellent order and with unclouded memory. Amongst the pleasant stories which he used to tell was this:

In Florence there was a young man called Frederick, son of Master Philip Alberighi, who for military ability and for courteous manners was reputed above all other gentlemen of Tuscany. He, as often happens with gentlemen, became enamoured of a gentle lady called Madonna Giovanni, in her time considered the most beautiful and most graceful woman in Florence. In order that he might win her love he tilted and exercised in arms, made feasts and donations, and spent all his substance without restraint. But Madonna Giovanni, no less honest than beautiful, cared for none of these things which he did for her, nor for him. Frederick then spent more than his means admitted, and gaining nothing, as easily happens, his money disappeared, and he remained poor and without any other property than a poor little farm, by the income of which he was barely able to live; besides this, he had his falcon, one of the best in the world. On this account, and because unable to remain in the city as he desired, though more than ever devoted, he remained at Campi, where his little farm was; and there, as he might hunt, he endured his poverty patiently.

Now it happened one day, when Frederick had come to

extreme poverty, that the husband of Madonna Giovanni became ill, and, seeing death at hand, made his will; and being very rich, in this will left as his heir his son, a well-grown boy; and next to him, as he had greatly loved Madonna Giovanni, he made her his heir if his son should die without legitimate heirs, and then died. Remaining then a widow, as the custom is amongst our women, Madonna Giovanni went that summer with her son into the country on an estate of hers near to that of Frederick, so that it happened that this boy, beginning to become friendly with Frederick and to cultivate a liking for books and birds, and having seen many times the falcon of Frederick fly, took an extreme pleasure in it and desired very greatly to have it, but did not dare to ask it, seeing that it was so dear to Frederick.

In this state of things it happened that the boy became ill, and on this account the mother, sorrowing greatly, he being that which she loved most of everything which she had, tended him constantly and never ceased comforting him; and begged him that if there was anything that he wanted, to tell her, so that she certainly, if it were possible to get it, would obtain it for him. The young man, hearing many times this proposal, said: "Mother, if you can manage that I should have the falcon of Frederick, I believe that I should get well at once." The mother, hearing this, reflected with herself and began to study what she might do. She knew that Frederick had long loved her, and that he had never received from her even a look; on this account she said: "How can I send to him or go to him, to ask for this falcon, which is, by what I hear, the thing that he most loves, and which besides keeps him in the world; and how can I be so ungrateful as to take from a gentleman what I desire, when it is the only thing that he has to give him pleasure?" Embarrassed by such thoughts, and feeling that she was certain to have it if she asked it of him, and not knowing what to say, she did not reply to her son, but was silent. Finally, the love of her son overcoming her, she decided to satisfy him, whatever might happen, not sending but going herself for the falcon; and she replied: "My son, be comforted and try to get well, for I promise you that the first thing I do to-morrow will be to go and bring to you the falcon"; on which account the son in his joy showed the same day an improve-

ment. The lady the next day took as companion another lady, and as if for pleasure went to the house of Frederick and asked for him. It being early, he had not been hawking, and was in his garden attending to certain little operations; and hearing that Madonna Giovanni asked for him at the door, wondering greatly, joyfully went. She, seeing him coming, with a ladylike pleasure went to meet him, and Frederick having saluted her with reverence, she said: "I hope you are well, Frederick," and then went on: "I have come to recompense you for the losses which you have already had on my account, loving me more than you need; and the reparation is, then, that I intend with this my companion to dine with you familiarly to-day." To this Frederick humbly replied: "Madonna, I do not remember ever to have suffered any loss on your account, but so much good that if ever I was worth anything, it is due to your worth, and to the love which I have borne you; and certainly your frank visit is dearer to me than would have been the being able to spend as much more as I have already spent, for you have come to a very poor house." So saying, he received them into his house in humility and conducted them into his garden; and then, not having any person to keep her company, he said: "Madonna, since there is no one else, this good woman, the wife of my gardener, will keep you company while I go to arrange the table."

He, although his poverty was so great, had not yet realised how he had, without method or pleasure, spent his fortune; but this morning, finding nothing with which he could do honour to the lady for whose love he had already entertained so many men, made him think and suffer extremely; he cursed his fortune, and as a man beside himself ran hither and thither, finding neither money nor anything to pawn. It being late, and his desire to honour the gentle lady in some manner, and not wishing to call on anybody else, but rather to do all himself, his eyes fell upon his beloved falcon, which was in his cage above the table. He therefore took it, and finding it fat, and not having any other resource, he considered it to be a proper food for such a woman; and without thinking any further, he wrung its neck and ordered his servant that, it being plucked and prepared, it should be put on the spit and roasted immediately. And

setting the table with the whitest of linen, of which he had still a little left, with a delighted countenance he returned to the lady and told her that such dinner as he was able to prepare for her was ready. Thereupon, the lady with her companion, rising, went to dinner, and without knowing what she ate or what Frederick served, ate the good falcon.

Then, leaving the table, and after pleasant conversation with him, it appeared to the lady that it was time to say what she had come for, and so she began amiably to say to Frederick: "Frederick, recalling your past life and my honesty, which perhaps you considered cruelty and severity, I do not doubt in the least that you will be astonished at my presumption, hearing what I have come for; but if you had ever had children, through whom you might know how great is the love which one bears them, it seems to me certain that in part you would excuse me. But as you have not, I, who have one, cannot escape the law common to all mothers; obeying which, I am obliged, apart from my own pleasure, and all other convention and duty, to ask of you a gift which I know is extremely dear, and reasonably so, because no other delight and no other amusement and no other consolation has your exhausted fortune left you; this gift is your falcon, which my boy has become so strongly enamoured of, that if I do not take it to him I fear that his illness will become so much aggravated that I may lose him in consequence; therefore I pray you, not on account of the love which you bear me, but because of your nobility, which has shown greater courtesy than that of any other man, that you would be so kind, so good, as to give it to me, in order that by this gift the life of my son may be preserved, and I be forever under obligation to you."

Frederick, hearing what the lady demanded, and knowing that he could not serve her, because he had already given it to her to eat, commenced in her presence to weep so that he could not speak a word in reply; which weeping the lady at first believed to be for sorrow at having to give up his good falcon more than anything else, and was about to tell him that she did not want it, but, hesitating, waited the reply of Frederick until the weeping ceased, when he spoke thus: "Madonna, since it pleased God that I bestowed my love upon you, money, influence, and fortune have been contrary

to me, and have given me great trouble; but all these things are trivial in respect to what fortune makes me at present suffer, for which I shall never have peace, thinking that you have come here to my poor house—to which while I was rich you never deigned to come—and asked of me a little gift, and that fortune has so decreed that I shall not be able to give it to you; and why I cannot do so I will tell you in a few words. When I heard that you in your kindness wished to dine with me, having regard for your excellence and your worth, I considered it worthy and proper to give you the dearest food in my power, and therefore the falcon for which you now ask me was this morning prepared for you, and you have had it roasted on your plate and I had prepared it with delight; but now, seeing that you desire it in another manner, the sorrow that I cannot so please you is so great that never again shall I have peace"; and saying this, the feathers and the feet and the beak were brought before them in evidence; which thing the lady seeing and hearing, first blamed him for having entertained a woman with such a falcon, and then praised the greatness of his mind, which his poverty had not been able to diminish. Then, there being no hope of having the falcon on account of which the health of her son was in question, in melancholy she departed and returned to her son; who either for grief at not being able to have the falcon, or for the illness which might have brought him to this state, did not survive for many days, and to the great sorrow of his mother passed from this life.

She, full of tears and of sorrow, and remaining rich and still young, was urged many times by her brothers to marry, which thing she had never wished; but being continually urged, and remembering the worth of Frederick and his last munificence, and that he had killed his beloved falcon to honour her, said to her brothers: "I would willingly, if it please you, remain as I am; but if it please you more that I should take a husband, certainly I will never take any other if I do not take Frederick degli Alberighi." At this her brothers, making fun of her, said: "Silly creature, what do you say? Why do you choose him? He has nothing in the world." To this she replied: "My brothers, I know very well that it is as you say; but I prefer rather a man who has need of riches, than riches that have need of a man." The brothers,

hearing her mind, and knowing Frederick for a worthy man, —although poor—as she wished, gave her with all her wealth to him; who, seeing this excellent woman whom he had so much loved become his wife, and besides that, being most rich, becoming economical, lived in happiness with her to the end of his days.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

V

1500 TO 1600:

Till Eulenspiegel (1515).
Tales, François Rabelais, Gargantua and Pantagruel (1532–64).[1]
Grande Parangon de Nouvelles Nouvelles, Nicolas de Troyes (1535).
Belfagor, Giovanni Brevio (1545).
Propos Rustiques, Noël du Fail (1547).
The Thousand and One Nights (earliest Mss., 1548).
Baliverneries, Noël du Fail (1548).
Le Cene, A. F. Grazzini (16th century).
Tredeci Piacevoli Notte, G. F. Straparola (1550–1554).[2]
Lazarillo de Tormes, D. H. de Mendoza? (1554).
Novelle, Matteo Bandello (1544–73).
Das Rollwagen Büchlein, Jörg Wickram (1555).
Gartengesellschaft, Jacob Frei (1556).
Weg Kürzer, M. Montanus (1557).
Heptaméron, Marguerite de Navarre (1558).
Nouvelles Récréations et Joyeux Devis, Bonaventure des Periers (1558).
Ecatommiti; G. B. Giraldi, or Cinthio (1565).
Wendunmuth, H. W. Kirchhoff (1565–1603).
The Palace of Pleasure, William Painter (1566–1567).
Penelope's Web, Robert Greene (1588).
Alcida, Robert Greene (1588?).
The Gentle Craft, Thomas Deloney (1597).

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[1] This arrangement of dates indicates publication between the dates given, inclusive.—[ED.]

[2] This arrangement of dates indicates publication at the dates given.—[ED.]

THE STORY OF ALI BABA, AND THE FORTY ROBBERS DESTROYED BY A SLAVE

THE STORY OF ALI BABA, AND THE FORTY ROBBERS DESTROYED BY A SLAVE

THE oldest known manuscript of The Thousand and One Nights, popularly known in English as The Arabian Nights' Entertainments, dates from 1548. The Nights were probably reduced to their present form in Cairo, Egypt. The tales are a working-over into Arabic of a much older Persian original, which in its turn must have been made up of stories collected from a remoter antiquity. In the transition from Persian to Arabic, much was undoubtedly both changed and added. There are three styles of writing employed in the stories: a prose lying midway between the literary language and the common speech; a strange riming style built up rhythmically on a rime or rimes; and lastly, verse proper. To this day the *ráwi*, the professional story-teller, recites these tales in Bagdad and in Cairo, declaiming the prose, intoning the rime paragraphs, and chanting the verse to the accompaniment of a *rabáb*.

Regarding the character of the stories and the material contained in them, there may be distinguished three categories: beast-fables, fairy-tales, and anecdotes. The beast-fables represent probably the oldest structure; the fairy-tales show the Eastern imagination at its best, and are, according to Sir Richard F. Burton, "wholly and purely Persian"; while the anecdotes, including the stories introduced to prove a point or to point a moral, are the genuine product of the Arabic mind.

The Story of Ali Baba is not technically a part of The Nights. It comes to us through Antoine Galland, the

Frenchman who first (1704–17) put The Nights into European circulation. It is to be found with Aladdin and other favourites, also apocryphal, in the body of his Nights, but it exists in no known manuscript of the tales, and has not yet been discovered in any Arabic form. There are two plausible theories for its origin: one is that Galland heard it in the East, and wrote it out from the version as recited; the other, that it is a tale of late writing, added to the original body of The Nights, perhaps in the seventeenth century. As a seventeenth-century original for Aladdin has recently been discovered, it is possible that this is the true explanation. But while the matter is undecided, Ali Baba may conveniently be classed with the body of The Nights. As far as internal evidence goes, it is one with them; certainly no story is more characteristic of the collection at its best, and assuredly none is better known to English readers.

Of English translations of The Nights, based on the Arabic, there are now three: that of E. W. Lane, considerably abridged and somewhat expurgated; that by John Payne, based upon the Macon MSS.; and Sir Richard F. Burton's, which contains tales not included in the Macon MSS., and drawn from other printed texts, and manuscripts. The present version of Ali Baba is an English translation of Galland's.

AUTHORITIES:

A History of Arabic Literature, by Clément Huart (Literatures of the World series).

Terminal Essay by Sir Richard F. Burton to his translation of The Nights.

Arabian Society in the Middle Ages, by E. W. Lane; edited by Stanley Lane-Poole.

THE STORY OF ALI BABA, AND THE FORTY ROBBERS DESTROYED BY A SLAVE

In a town in Persia there lived two brothers, one named Cassim, the other Ali Baba. Their father left them no great property; but as he had divided it equally between them, it should seem their fortune would have been equal; but chance directed otherwise.

Cassim married a wife, who, soon after their marriage, became heiress to a plentiful estate, and a good shop and warehouse full of rich merchandises; so that he all at once became one of the richest and most considerable merchants, and lived at his ease.

Ali Baba, on the other hand, who married a woman as poor as himself, lived in a very mean habitation, and had no other means to maintain his wife and children but his daily labour, by cutting of wood in a forest near the town, and bringing it upon three asses, which were his whole substance, to town to sell.

One day, when Ali Baba was in the forest, and had just cut wood enough to load his asses, he saw at a distance a great cloud of dust, which seemed to approach towards him. He observed it very attentively, and distinguished a large body of horse coming briskly on; and though they did not talk of robbers in that country, Ali Baba began to think that they might prove such; and, without considering what might become of his asses, he was resolved to save himself. He climbed up a large thick tree, whose branches, at a little distance from the ground, divided in a circular form so close to one another that there was but little space between them. He placed himself in the middle, from whence he could see all that passed without being seen; and this tree stood at the bottom of a single rock, which was very high above it, and so steep and craggy that nobody could climb up it.

This troop, who were all well mounted and well armed,

came to the foot of this rock, and there dismounted. Ali Baba counted forty of them; and, by their looks and equipage, never doubted they were thieves. Nor was he mistaken in his opinion; for they were a troop of banditti, who, without doing any hurt to the neighbourhood, robbed at a distance, and made that place their rendezvous; and what confirmed him in this opinion was, every man unbridled his horse and tied him to some shrub or other, and hung about his neck a bag of corn, which they brought behind them. Then each of them took his portmanteau, which seemed to Ali Baba to be full of gold and silver by their weight. One, who was most personable among them, and whom he took to be their captain, came with his portmanteau on his back under the tree in which Ali Baba was hid; and, making his way through some shrubs, pronounced these words so distinctly, *Open, Sesame,* that Ali Baba heard him. As soon as the captain of the robbers had uttered these words, a door opened; and after he had made all his troop go in before him, he followed them, and the door shut again of itself.

The robbers stayed some time within the rock; and Ali Baba, who feared that some one, or all of them together, should come out and catch him if he should endeavour to make his escape, was obliged to sit patiently in the tree. He was, nevertheless, tempted once or twice to get down and mount one of their horses, and lead another, driving his asses before him with all the haste he could to town; but the uncertainty of the event made him choose the safer way.

At last the door opened again, and the forty robbers came out. As the captain went in last, he came out first, and stood to see them all pass him; and then Ali Baba heard him make the door close, by pronouncing these words, *Shut, Sesame.* Every man went and bridled his horse, fastening his portmanteau and mounting again; and when the captain saw them all ready, he put himself at their head, and they returned the same way they came.

Ali Baba did not immediately quit his tree; for, said he to himself, they may have forgotten something and come back again, and then I shall be taken. He followed them with his eyes as far as he could see them; and after that stayed a considerable time before he came down. Remembering the words the captain of the robbers made use of to

cause the door to open and shut, he had the curiosity to try if his pronouncing them would have the same effect. Accordingly he went among the shrubs, and perceiving the door concealed behind them, he stood before it, and said, *Open, Sesame.* The door instantly flew wide open.

Ali Baba, who expected a dark, dismal place, was very much surprised to see it well-lighted and spacious, cut out by men's hands in the form of a vault, which received the light from an opening at the top of the rock, cut in like manner. He saw all sorts of provisions, and rich bales of merchandises, of silk stuff, brocade, and valuable carpeting, piled upon one another; and, above all, gold and silver in great heaps, and money in great leather purses. The sight of all these riches made him believe that this cave had been occupied for ages by robbers, who succeeded one another.

Ali Baba did not stand long to consider what he should do, but went immediately into the cave, and as soon as he was in, the door shut again. But this did not disturb him, because he knew the secret to open it again. He never regarded the silver, but made the best use of his time in carrying out as much of the gold coin, which was in bags, at several times, as he thought his three asses could carry. When he had done, he collected his asses, which were dispersed, and when he had loaded them with the bags, laid the wood on them in such a manner that they could not be seen. When he had done, he stood before the door, and pronouncing the words, *Shut, Sesame,* the door closed after him; for it had shut of itself while he was within, and remained open while he was out. He then made the best of his way to town.

When Ali Baba got home, he drove his asses into a little yard, and shut the gates very carefully, threw off the wood that covered the bags, carried them into his house, and ranged them in order before his wife, who sat on a sofa.

His wife handled the bags, and finding them full of money, suspected that her husband had been robbing, insomuch that when he brought them all in, she could not help saying: Ali Baba, have you been so unhappy as to—Be quiet, wife, interrupted Ali Baba; Do not frighten yourself; I am no robber, unless he can be one who steals from robbers. You will no longer entertain an ill opinion of me when I shall tell you my good fortune. Then he emptied the bags,

which raised such a great heap of gold as dazzled his wife's eyes: and when he had done, he told her the whole adventure from the beginning to the end; and, above all, recommended it to her to keep it secret.

The wife, recovered and cured of her fears, rejoiced with her husband at their good luck, and would count the money piece by piece. Wife, replied Ali Baba, You do not know what you undertake, when you pretend to count the money; you will never have done. I will go and dig a hole and bury it; there is no time to be lost.—You are in the right of it, husband, replied the wife, But let us know, as nigh as possible, how much we have. I will go and borrow a small measure in the neighbourhood, and measure it, while you dig the hole.—What you are going to do is to no purpose, wife, said Ali Baba; If you would take my advice, you had better let it alone; but be sure to keep the secret, and do what you please.

Away the wife ran to her brother-in-law, Cassim, who lived just by, but was not then at home; and addressing herself to his wife, desired her to lend her a measure for a little while. Her sister-in-law asked her whether she would have a great or a small one. The other asked for a small one. She bid her stay a little, and she would readily fetch one.

The sister-in-law did so, but as she knew very well Ali Baba's poverty, she was curious to know what sort of grain his wife wanted to measure; and bethought herself of artfully putting some suet at the bottom of the measure, and brought it to her with an excuse, that she was sorry that she had made her stay so long, but that she could not find it sooner.

Ali Baba's wife went home, set the measure upon the heap of gold, and filled it and emptied it often, at a small distance upon the sofa, till she had done: and she was very well satisfied to find the number of measures amounted to as many as they did, and went to tell her husband, who had almost finished digging the hole. While Ali Baba was burying the gold, his wife, to show her exactness and diligence to her sister-in-law, carried the measure back again, but without taking notice that a piece of gold stuck at the bottom. Sister, said she, giving it to her again: You see that I have not kept your measure long; I am obliged to you for it, and return it with thanks,

As soon as Ali Baba's wife's back was turned, Cassim's wife looked at the bottom of the measure, and was in an inexpressible surprise to find a piece of gold stuck to it. Envy immediately possessed her breast. What! said she, Has Ali Baba gold so plentiful as to measure it? Where has that poor wretch got all this gold? Cassim, her husband, was not at home, as I said before, but at his shop, which he left always in the evening. His wife waited for him, and thought the time an age; so great was her impatience to tell him the news, at which he would be as much surprised.

When Cassim came home, his wife said to him: Cassim, I warrant you, you think yourself rich, but you are much mistaken; Ali Baba is infinitely richer than you; he does not count his money, but measures it. Cassim desired her to explain the riddle, which she did, by telling him the stratagem she had made use of to make the discovery, and showed him the piece of money, which was so old a coin that they could not tell in what prince's reign it was coined.

Cassim, instead of being pleased at his brother's prosperity, conceived a mortal jealousy, and could not sleep all that night for it, but went to him in the morning before sunrise. Now, Cassim, after he had married the rich widow, never treated Ali Baba as a brother, but forgot him. Ali Baba, said he, accosting him, You are very reserved in your affairs; you pretend to be miserably poor, and yet you measure gold. How, brother! replied Ali Baba; I do not know what you mean: explain yourself.—Do you pretend ignorance? replied Cassim, showing him the piece of gold his wife had given him. How many of these pieces, added he, Have you? My wife found this at the bottom of the measure you borrowed yesterday.

By this discourse Ali Baba perceived that Cassim and his wife, through his own wife's folly, knew what they had so much reason to keep secret; but what was done could not be recalled; therefore, without showing the least surprise or trouble, he confessed all, and told his brother by what chance he had discovered this retreat of the thieves, and in what place it was; and offered him part of his treasure to keep the secret.—I expect as much, replied Cassim haughtily; But I will know exactly where this treasure is, and the signs and tokens how I may go to it myself when I have a mind;

otherwise I will go and inform against you, and then you will not only get no more, but will lose all you have got, and I shall have my share for my information.

Ali Baba, more out of his natural good temper than frightened by the insulting menaces of a barbarous brother, told him all he desired, and even the very words he was to make use of to go into the cave and to come out again.

Cassim, who wanted no more of Ali Baba, left him, resolving to be beforehand with him, and hoping to get all the treasure to himself. He rose early the next morning a long time before the sun, and set out with ten mules laden with great chests, which he designed to fill; proposing to carry many more the next time, according to the riches he found; and followed the road which Ali Baba had told him. He was not long before he came to the rock, and found out the place by the tree, and other marks his brother had given him. When he came to the door he pronounced these words, *Open, Sesame,* and it opened; and when he was in, shut again. In examining the cave, he was in great admiration to find much more riches than he apprehended by Ali Baba's relation. He was so covetous and fond of riches, that he could have spent the whole day in feasting his eyes with so much treasure, if the thought that he came to carry some away with him, and loading his mules, had not hindered him. He laid as many bags of gold as he could carry away at the door; and coming at last to open the door, his thoughts were so full of the great riches he should possess, that he could not think of the necessary word; but instead of *Sesame,* said, *Open, Barley,* and was much amazed to find that the door did not open, but remained fast shut. He named several sorts of grain, all but the right, and the door would not open.

Cassim never expected such an accident, and was so frightened at the danger he was in, that the more he endeavoured to remember the word *Sesame,* the more his memory was confounded; and he had as much forgotten it as if he had never heard it in his life before. He threw down the bags he had loaded himself with, and walked hastily up and down the cave, without having the least regard to all the riches that were round him. In this miserable condition we will leave him bewailing his fate, and undeserving of pity.

About noon the robbers returned to their cave, and

some distance from it saw Cassim's mules straggling about the rock, with great chests on their backs. Alarmed at this novelty they galloped full speed to the cave. They drove away the mules, which Cassim had neglected to fasten, and they strayed away through the forest so far that they were soon out of sight. The robbers never gave themselves the trouble to pursue the mules; they were more concerned to know whom they belonged to. And while some of them searched about the rock, the captain and the rest went directly to the door, with their naked sabres in their hands; and pronouncing the words, it opened.

Cassim, who heard the noise of the horses' feet from the middle of the cave, never doubted of the coming of the robbers and his approaching death; but resolved to make one effort to escape from them. To this end he stood ready at the door, and no sooner heard the word *Sesame,* which he had forgotten, and saw the door open, but he jumped briskly out, and threw the captain down; but could not escape the other robbers, who with their sabres soon deprived him of life.

The first care of the robbers after this was to go into the cave. They found all the bags which Cassim had brought to the door, to be more ready to load his mules with; and carried them all back again to their places, without perceiving what Ali Baba had taken away before. Then holding a council, and deliberating upon this matter, they guessed that Cassim, when he was in, could not get out again; but they could not imagine how he got in. It came into their heads that he might have got down by the top of the cave; but the opening by which it received light was so high, and the top of the rock so inaccessible without, besides that nothing showed that he had done so, that they believed it impracticable for them to find out. That he came in at the door they could not satisfy themselves, unless he had the secret of making it open. In short, none of them could imagine which way he entered; for they were all persuaded that nobody knew their secret, little imagining that Ali Baba had watched them. But, however it happened, it was a matter of the greatest importance to them to secure their riches. They agreed, therefore, to cut Cassim's body into four quarters; and to hang two on one side, and two on the other, within

the door of the cave, to terrify any person that should attemp the same thing, determining not to return to the cave ti the stench of the body was completely exhaled.

They had no sooner taken this resolution than they exe cuted it; and when they had nothing more to detain then they left the place of their retreat well closed. They mounte their horses and went to beat the roads again, and to attac the caravans they should meet.

In the meantime Cassim's wife was very uneasy whe night came and her husband was not returned. She ran t Ali Baba in a terrible fright, and said: I believe, brother-in law, that you know that Cassim, your brother, is gone to th forest, and upon what account; it is now night, and he is no returned; I am afraid some misfortune has come to him Ali Baba, who never disputed but that his brother, after wha he had said to him, would go to the forest, declined goi himself that day, for fear of giving him any umbrage; there fore told her, without any reflection upon her husband's un handsome behaviour, that she need not frighten herself, fo that certainly Cassim did not think it proper to come int the town till the night should be pretty far advanced.

Cassim's wife, considering how much it concerned he husband to keep this thing secret, was the more easily per suaded to believe him. She went home again, and waite patiently till midnight. Then her fear redoubled with grie the more sensible, because she durst not vent it, nor show it but was forced to keep it secret from the neighbourhood Then, as if her fault had been irreparable, she repented of he foolish curiosity, and cursed her desire of penetrating int the affairs of her brother- and sister-in-law. She spent al that night in weeping; and as soon as it was day, went t them, telling them, by her tears, the cause of her coming.

Ali Baba did not wait for his sister-in-law to desire him t go and see what was become of Cassim, but went immediatel with his three asses, begging of her at first to moderate he affliction. He went to the forest, and when he came nea the rock, and having seen neither his brother nor his mule in his way, he was very much surprised to see some bloo spilt by the door, which he took for an ill omen; but wher he had pronounced the word, and the door opened, he wa much more startled at the dismal sight of his brother's quar-

ters. He was not long in determining how he should pay the last dues to his brother; and, without remembering the little brotherly friendship he had for him, went into the cave, to find something to wrap them in, and loaded one of his asses with them, and covered them over with wood. The other two asses he loaded with bags of gold, covering them with wood also as before; and then bidding the door shut, came away: but was so cautious as to stop some time at the end of the forest, that he might not go into the town before night. When he came home, he drove the two asses loaded with gold into his little yard; and left the care of unloading them to his wife, while he led the other to his sister-in-law's.

Ali Baba knocked at the door, which was opened by Morgiana, a cunning, intelligent slave, fruitful in inventions to insure success in the most difficult undertakings: and Ali Baba knew her to be such. When he came into the court, he unloaded the ass; and, taking Morgiana aside, said to her: The first thing I ask of you is an inviolable secrecy, which you will find is necessary both for your mistress's sake and mine. Your master's body is contained in these two bundles; and our business is, to bury him as if he died a natural death. Go, tell your mistress I want to speak with her; and mind what I say to you.

Morgiana went to her mistress, and Ali Baba followed her. Well, brother, said she, with great impatience, What news do you bring me of my husband? I perceive no comfort in your countenance.—Sister, answered Ali Baba, I cannot tell you anything before you hear my story from the beginning to the end, without speaking a word; for it is of as great importance to you as to me to keep what has happened secret.—Alas! said she, This preamble lets me know that my husband is dead; but at the same time I know the necessity of the secrecy you require of me, and I must constrain myself: say on; I will hear you.

Then Ali Baba told his sister the success of his journey, till he came to the finding of Cassim's body. Now, said he, Sister, I have something to tell you, which will afflict you much the more, because it is what you so little expect; but it cannot now be remedied; and if anything can comfort you, I offer to put that little which God hath sent me, to what you have, and marry you; assuring you that my wife will not be

jealous, and that we shall live happily together. If this proposal is agreeable to you, we must think of acting so, as that my brother should appear to have died a natural death. I think you may leave the management of it to Morgiana, and I will contribute all that lies in my power.

What could Cassim's widow do better than accept of this proposal? For though her first husband had left behind him plentiful substance, this second was much richer, and by the discovery of this treasure might be much more so. Instead of rejecting the offer, she looked upon it as a reasonable motive to comfort her; and drying up her tears, which began to flow abundantly, and suppressing the outcries usual with women who have lost their husbands, showed Ali Baba she approved of his proposal. Ali Baba left the widow, and recommended to Morgiana to act her part well, and then returned home with his ass.

Morgiana went out at the same time to an apothecary, and asked him for a sort of lozenges, which he prepared, and which were very efficacious in the most dangerous distempers. The apothecary asked her who was sick at her master's. She replied with a sigh, her good master, Cassim himself: that they knew not what his distemper was, but that he could neither eat nor speak. After these words Morgiana carried the lozenges home with her, and the next morning went to the same apothecary's again; and, with tears in her eyes, asked for an essence which they used to give to sick people only when at the last extremity. Alas! said she, taking it from the apothecary, I am afraid that this remedy will have no better effect than the lozenges, and that I shall lose my good master.

On the other hand, as Ali Baba and his wife were often seen to go between Cassim's and their own house all that day, and to seem melancholy, nobody was surprised in the evening to hear the lamentable shrieks and cries of Cassim's wife and Morgiana, who told it everywhere that her master was dead.

The next morning soon after day appeared, Morgiana, who knew a certain old cobbler that opened his stall early, before other people, went to him, and, bidding him good morrow, put a piece of gold into his hand.—Well, said Baba Mustapha, which was his name, and who was a merry old

fellow, looking on the gold, though it was hardly daylight, and seeing what it was: This is good hansel; what must I do for it? I am ready.

Baba Mustapha, said Morgiana, You must take with you your sewing-tackle, and go with me; but I must tell you, I shall blindfold you when you come to such a place.

Baba Mustapha seemed to boggle a little at these words. Oh, oh! replied he, You would have me do something against my conscience, or against my honour.—God forbid! said Morgiana, putting another piece of gold into his hand, That I should ask anything that is contrary to your honour; only come along with me and fear nothing.

Baba Mustapha went with Morgiana, who, after she had bound his eyes with a handkerchief, at the place she told him of, carried him to her deceased master's house, and never unloosed his eyes till he came into the room where she had put the corpse together. Baba Mustapha, said she, You must make haste, and sew these quarters together; and when you have done, I will give you another piece of gold.

After Baba Mustapha had done, she blindfolded him again, gave him the third piece of gold, as she promised, recommending secrecy to him, carried him back to the place where she first bound his eyes, pulled off the bandage, and let him go home, but watched him that he returned to his stall, till he was quite out of sight, for fear he should have the curiosity to return and dodge her, and then went home.

By the time Morgiana had warmed some water to wash the body, Ali Baba came with incense to embalm it, and bury it with the usual ceremonies. Not long after, the joiner, according to Ali Baba's orders, brought the coffin, which Morgiana, that he might find out nothing, received at the door, and helped Ali Baba to put the body into it; and as soon as he had nailed it up, she went to the mosque to tell the imam that they were ready. The people of the mosque, whose business it was to wash the dead, offered to perform their duty, but she told them it was done already.

Morgiana had scarce got home before the imam and the other ministers of the mosque came. Four neighbours carried the corpse on their shoulders to the burying-ground, following the imam, who recited some prayers. Morgiana, as a slave to the deceased, followed the corpse, weeping, beating

her breast, and tearing her hair. And Ali Baba came after with some neighbours, who often relieved the others in carrying the corpse to the burying-ground.

Cassim's wife stayed at home mourning, uttering lamentable cries with the women of the neighbourhood, who came according to custom during the funeral; and, joining their lamentations with hers, filled the quarter far and near with sorrow.

In this manner Cassim's melancholy death was concealed and hushed up between Ali Baba, his wife, Cassim's widow, and Morgiana, with so much contrivance, that nobody in the city had the least knowledge or suspicion of it.

Three or four days after the funeral, Ali Baba removed his few goods to the house of his brother's widow; but the money he had taken from the robbers he conveyed thither by night; and soon after the marriage with his sister-in-law was published, and as these marriages are common in our religion, nobody was surprised.

As for Cassim's shop, Ali Baba gave it to his own eldest son, who had been some time out of his apprenticeship to a great merchant; promising him withal, that if he managed well, he would soon give him a fortune to marry very advantageously according to his situation.

Let us now leave Ali Baba to enjoy the beginning of his good fortune, and return to the forty robbers.

They came again at the appointed time to visit their retreat in the forest; but how great was their surprise to find Cassim's body taken away, and some of their bags of gold. We are certainly discovered, said the captain, And shall be undone, if we do not take care and speedily apply some remedy; otherwise we shall insensibly lose all the riches which our ancestors have been so many years amassing together with so much pains and danger. All that we can think of this loss which we have sustained is, that the thief whom we have surprised had the secret of opening the door, and we came luckily as he was coming out: but his body being removed, and with it some of our money, plainly shows that he has an accomplice; and as it is likely that there were but two who had got this secret, and one has been caught, we must look narrowly after the other. What say you to it, my lads?

All the robbers thought the captain's proposal so reasonable, that they unanimously approved of it; and agreed that they must lay all other enterprises aside, to follow this closely, and not give it up till they had succeeded.

I expected no less, said the captain, From your courage and bravery: but, first of all, one of you who is bold, artful, and enterprising, must go into the town dressed like a traveller and stranger, and exert all his contrivance to try if he can hear any talk of the strange death of the man whom we have killed, as he deserved, and to endeavour to find out who he was, and where he lived. This is a matter of the first importance for us to know, that we may do nothing which we may have reason to repent of, by discovering ourselves in a country where we have lived so long unknown, and where we have so much reason to continue; but to warn that man who shall take upon himself this commission, and to prevent our being deceived by his giving us a false report, which may be the cause of our ruin, I ask you all, if you do not think it fit that in that case he shall submit to suffer death?

Without waiting for the suffrages of his companions, one of the robbers started up, and said: I submit to this law, and think it an honour to expose my life, by taking such a commission upon me; but remember, at least, if I do not succeed, that I neither wanted courage nor good-will to serve the troop.

After this robber had received great commendations from the captain and his comrades, he disguised himself so that nobody would take him for what he was; and taking his leave of the troop that night, went into the town just at daybreak, and walked up and down till he came to Baba Mustapha's stall, which was always open before any of the shops of the town.

Baba Mustapha was set on his seat with an awl in his hand, just going to work. The robber saluted him, bidding him good morrow; and perceiving that he was very old, he said: Honest man, you begin to work very early; is it possible that any one of your age can see so well? I question, even if it were somewhat lighter, whether you could see to stitch.

Certainly, replied Baba Mustapha, You must be a stranger, and do not know me; for, old as I am, I have extraordinarily good eyes; and you will not doubt it when I tell you that I

sewed a dead body together in a place where I had not so much light as I have now.

The robber was overjoyed to think that he had addressed himself, at his first coming into the town, to a man who gave him the intelligence he wanted, without asking him. A dead body! replied he with amazement, to make him explain himself. What could you sew up a dead body for? added he: You mean, you sewed up his winding-sheet.—No, no, answered Baba Mustapha, I know what I say; you want to have me speak out, but you shall know no more.

The robber wanted no greater insight to be persuaded that he had discovered what he came about. He pulled out a piece of gold, and putting it into Baba Mustapha's hand, said to him: I do not want to know your secret, though I can assure you that I would not divulge it if you trusted me with it. The only thing which I desire of you, is to do me the favour to show the house where you stitched up the dead body.

If I would do you that favour which you ask of me, replied Baba Mustapha, holding the money in his hand, ready to return it, I assure you I cannot; and you may believe me, on my word, I was carried to a certain place, where they first blinded me, and then led me to the house, and brought me back again after the same manner; therefore you see the impossibility of doing what you desire.

Well, replied the robber, You may remember a little of the way that you were led blindfold. Come, let me blind your eyes at the same place. We will walk together by the same way and turnings; perhaps you may remember some part; and as everybody ought to be paid for their trouble, there is another piece of gold for you: gratify me in what I ask you. So saying, he put another piece of gold into his hand.

The two pieces of gold were great temptations to Baba Mustapha. He looked at them a long time in his hand, without saying a word, thinking with himself what he should do; but at last he pulled out his purse, and put them in. I cannot assure you, said he to the robber, That I remember the way exactly; but, since you desire it, I will try what I can do. At these words Baba Mustapha rose up, to the great satisfaction of the robber, and without shutting up his shop, where he had nothing valuable to lose, he led the robber to the

place where Morgiana bound his eyes. It was here, said Baba Mustapha, I was blindfolded; and I turned as you see me. The robber, who had his handkerchief ready, tied it over his eyes, and walked by him till he stopped, partly leading him, and partly guided by him. I think, said Baba Mustapha, I went no farther; and he had now stopped directly at Cassim's house, where Ali Baba lived then; upon which the thief, before he pulled off the band, marked the door with a piece of chalk, which he had ready in his hand; and when he pulled it off, he asked him if he knew whose house that was: to which Baba Mustapha replied, that as he did not live in that neighbourhood he could not tell.

The robber, finding that he could discover no more from Baba Mustapha, thanked him for the trouble he had given him, and left him to go back to his stall, while he returned to the forest, persuaded that he should be very well received.

A little after the robber and Baba Mustapha parted, Morgiana went out of Ali Baba's house for something; and coming home again, seeing the mark the robber had made, she stopped to observe it. What is the meaning of this mark? said she to herself; Somebody intends my master no good, or else some boy has been playing the rogue with it: with whatever intention it was done, added she, It is good to guard against the worst. Accordingly she went and fetched a piece of chalk, and marked two or three doors on each side in the same manner, without saying a word to her master or mistress.

In the meantime the thief rejoined his troop again in the forest, and told them the good success he had, expatiating upon his good fortune in meeting so soon with the only person who could inform him of what he wanted to know. All the robbers listened to him with the utmost satisfaction; when the captain, after commending his diligence, addressing himself to them all, said: Comrades, we have no time to lose; let us all set off well-armed, without its appearing who we are; and that we may not give any suspicion, let one or two go privately into the town together, and appoint the rendezvous in the great square; and in the meantime our comrade, who brought us the good news, and I, will go and find out the house, that we may consult what is best to be done.

This speech and plan was approved by all, and they were

soon ready. They filed off in small parcels of two or three, a the proper distance from each other; and all got into the tow without being in the least suspected. The captain and he tha came in the morning as a spy, came in last of all. He led th captain into the street where he had marked Ali Baba's house, and when they came to one of the houses which Morgiana had marked, he pointed it out. But going a little farther, to prevent being taken notice of, the captain observe that the next door was chalked after the same manner, an in the same place: and showing it to his guide, asked hi which house it was; that, or the first. The guide was so confounded, that he knew not what answer to make; and muc less, when he and the captain saw five or six houses beside marked after the same manner. He assured the captain, wit an oath, that he had marked but one, and could not tell wh had chalked the rest so like to that which he marked, an owned, in that confusion, he could not distinguish it.

The captain, finding that their design proved abortive went directly to the place of rendezvous and told the first o his troop that he met that they had lost their labour, and mus return to their cave the same way as they came. He himsel set the example, and they all returned as they came.

When the troop was all got together, the captain told the the reason of their returning; and presently the conducto was declared by all worthy of death. He condemned himself acknowledging that he ought to have taken better precaution and kneeled down to receive the stroke from him that wa appointed to cut off his head.

But as it was the safety of the troop that an injury shoul not go unpunished, another of the gang, who promised himself that he should succeed better, presented himself; and hi offer being accepted, he went and corrupted Baba Mustapha as the other had done; and being shown the house, marke it, in a place more remote from sight, with red chalk.

Not long after, Morgiana, whose eyes nothing could escape, went out; and seeing the red chalk, and arguing afte the same manner with herself, marked the other neighbour houses in the same place and manner.

The robber, at his return to his company, valued himsel very much upon the precaution he had taken, which he looke upon as an infallible way of distinguishing Ali Baba's hous

from his neighbours'; and the captain and all of them thought it must succeed. They conveyed themselves into the town in the same manner as before; and when the robber and his captain came to the street, they found the same difficulty; at which the captain was enraged, and the robber in as great confusion as his predecessor.

Thus the captain and his troop were forced to retire a second time, and much more dissatisfied; and the robber, as the author of the mistake, underwent the same punishment, which he willingly submitted to.

The captain, having lost two brave fellows of his troop, was afraid of diminishing it too much by pursuing this plan to get information about Ali Baba's house. He found, by their example, that their heads were not so good as their hands on such occasions, and therefore resolved to take upon himself this important commission.

Accordingly, he went and addressed himself to Baba Mustapha, who did him the same piece of service he had done to the former. He never amused himself with setting any particular mark on the house, but examined and observed it so carefully, by passing often by it, that it was impossible for him to mistake it.

The captain, very well satisfied with his journey, and informed of what he wanted to know, returned to the forest; and when he came into the cave, where the troop waited for him, he said: Now, comrades, nothing can prevent our full revenge; I am certain of the house, and in my way hither I have thought how to put it in execution, and if any one knows a better expedient, let him communicate it. Then he told them his contrivance; and as they approved of it, he ordered them to go into the towns and villages about and buy nineteen mules, and thirty-eight large leather jars, one full, and the others all empty.

In two or three days' time the robbers purchased the mules and jars, and as the mouths of the jars were rather too narrow for his purpose, the captain caused them to be widened; and after having put one of his men into each, with the weapons which he thought fit, leaving open the seam which had been undone to leave them room to breathe, he rubbed the jars on the outside with oil from the full vessel.

Things being thus prepared, when the nineteen mules were

loaded with thirty-seven robbers in jars and the jar of oil, the captain, as their driver, set out with them, and reached the town by the dusk of the evening, as he intended. He led them through the streets till he came to Ali Baba's, at whose door he designed to have knocked; but was prevented by his sitting there, after supper, to take a little fresh air. He stopped his mules, and addressed himself to him, and said: I have brought some oil here, a great way, to sell at to-morrow's market; and it is now so late, that I do not know where to lodge. If I should not be troublesome to you, do me the favour to let me pass the night with you, and I shall be very much obliged to you.

Though Ali Baba had seen the captain of the robbers in the forest, and had heard him speak, it was impossible for him to know him in the disguise of an oil-merchant. He told him he should be welcome, and immediately opened his gates for the mules to go into the yard. At the same time he called to a slave he had, and ordered him, when the mules were unloaded, not only to put them into the stable, but to give them corn and hay; and then went to Morgiana, to bid her get a good hot supper for his guest, and make him a good bed.

He did more. To make his guest as welcome as possible, when he saw the captain had unloaded his mules, and that they were put into the stable as he ordered, and he was looking for a place to pass the night in the air, he brought him into the hall where he received his company, telling him he would not suffer him to be in the court. The captain excused himself, on pretence of not being troublesome; but really to have room to execute his design, and it was not till after the most pressing importunity that he yielded. Ali Baba, not content to keep company with the man who had a design on his life till supper was ready, continued talking with him till it was ended, and repeating his offer of service.

The captain rose up at the same time, and went with him to the door; and while Ali Baba went into the kitchen to speak to Morgiana, he went into the yard, under pretence of looking at his mules. Ali Baba, after charging Morgiana afresh to take great care of his guest, said to her: To-morrow I design to go to the bath before day: take care my bathing-linen be ready, and give it to Abdallah [which was the

slave's name], and make me some good broth against I come back. After this he went to bed.

In the meantime, the captain of the robbers went from the stable to give his people orders what to do; and beginning at the first jar, and so on to the last, said to each man: As soon as I throw some stones out of the chamber-window where I lie, do not fail to cut the jar open with the knife you have about you, pointed and sharpened for the purpose, and come out, and I will be presently with you. After this he returned into the kitchen; and Morgiana, taking up a light, conducted him to his chamber, where, after she had asked him if he wanted anything, she left him; and he, to avoid any suspicion, put the light out soon after, and laid himself down in his clothes, that he might be the more ready to rise again.

Morgiana, remembering Ali Baba's orders, got his bathing-linen ready, and ordered Abdallah, who was not then gone to bed, to set on the pot for the broth; but while she skimmed the pot the lamp went out, and there was no more oil in the house, nor any candles. What to do she did not know, for the broth must be made. Abdallah, seeing her very uneasy, said: Do not fret and tease yourself, but go into the yard, and take some oil out of one of the jars.

Morgiana thanked Abdallah for his advice; and while he went to bed, near Ali Baba's room, that he might be the better able to rise and follow Ali Baba to the bath, she took the oil-pot, and went into the yard; and as she came nigh the first jar, the robber within said softly, Is it time?

Though the robber spoke low, Morgiana was struck with the voice the more, because the captain, when he unloaded the mules, opened this and all the other jars, to give air to his men, who were ill enough at their ease without wanting room to breathe.

Any other slave but Morgiana, so surprised as she was to find a man in a jar, instead of the oil she wanted, would have made such a noise as to have given an alarm, which would have been attended with ill consequences; whereas Morgiana, apprehending immediately the importance of keeping the secret, and the danger Ali Baba, his family, and she herself were in, and the necessity of applying a speedy remedy without noise, conceived at once the means, and collecting herself without showing the least emotion, answered: Not yet, but

presently. She went in this manner to all the jars, giving the same answer, till she came to the jar of oil.

By this means, Morgiana found that her master Ali Baba, who thought that he had entertained an oil-merchant, had admitted thirty-eight robbers into his house, looking on this pretended merchant as their captain. She made what haste she could to fill her oil-pot, and returned into her kitchen; where, as soon as she had lighted her lamp, she took a great kettle, and went again to the oil-jar, filled the kettle, and set it on a great wood fire to boil; and as soon as it boiled, went and poured enough into every jar to stifle and destroy the robber within.

When this action, worthy of the courage of Morgiana, was executed without any noise, as she had projected, she returned into the kitchen with the empty kettle, and shut the door; and having put out the great fire she had made to boil the oil, and leaving just enough to make the broth, put out also the lamp, and remained silent; resolving not to go to bed till she had observed what was to follow, through a window of the kitchen which opened into the yard, as far as the darkness of the night permitted.

She had not waited a quarter of an hour, before the captain of the robbers waked, got up, and opened the window; and finding no light, and hearing no noise, nor any one stirring in the house, gave the signal, by throwing little stones, several of which hit the jars, as he doubted not by the sound they gave. Then he listened, and neither hearing nor perceiving anything whereby he could judge that his companions stirred, he began to grow very uneasy, and threw stones again a second and a third time, and could not comprehend the reason that none of them should answer to his signal: cruelly alarmed, he went softly down into the yard, and going to the first jar, and asking the robber, whom he thought alive, if he was asleep, he smelled the hot boiled oil, which sent forth a steam out of the jar, and knew thereby that his plot to murder Ali Baba and plunder his house was discovered. Examining all the jars one ofter another, he found that all his gang were dead; and by the oil he missed out of the last jar, he guessed at the means and manner of their deaths. Enraged to despair at having failed in his design, he forçed the lock of a door, that led from the yard to the

garden; and, climbing over the walls of several gardens, at last made his escape.

When Morgiana heard no noise, and found, after waiting some time, that the captain did not return, she guessed that he chose rather to make his escape by the gardens than by the street-door, which was double-locked; satisfied and pleased to have succeeded so well, and at having secured the house, she went to bed and fell asleep.

Ali Baba rose before day, and, followed by his slave, went to the baths, entirely ignorant of the amazing accident that had happened at home; for Morgiana did not think it right to wake him before for fear of losing her opportunity; and afterwards she thought it needless to disturb him.

When he returned from the baths, and the sun had risen, he was very much surprised to see the oil-jars, and that the merchant was not gone with the mules. He asked Morgiana, who opened the door, and had let all things stand as they were, that he might see them, the reason of it. My good master, answered she, God preserve you and all your family! You will be better informed of what you wish to know when you have seen what I have to show you, if you will give yourself the trouble to follow me.

As soon as Morgiana had shut the door, Ali Baba followed her; and when she brought him into the yard, she bid him look into the first jar, and see if there was any oil. Ali Baba did so, and seeing a man, started back frightened, and cried out. Do not be afraid, said Morgiana; The man you see there can neither do you nor anybody else any harm. He is dead.—Ah, Morgiana! said Ali Baba, What is it you show me? Explain the meaning of it to me.—I will, replied Morgiana; Moderate your astonishment, and do not excite the curiosity of your neighbours; for it is of great importance to keep this affair secret. Look in all the other jars.

Ali Baba examined all the other jars, one after another; and when he came to that which had the oil in it, he found it prodigiously sunk, and stood for some time motionless, sometimes looking on the jars, sometimes on Morgiana, without saying a word, so great was his surprise: at last, when he had recovered himself, he said: And what is become of the merchant?

Merchant! answered she: He is as much one as I am. I

will tell you who he is, and what is become of him; but you had better hear the story in your own chamber; for it is time for your health that you had your broth after your bathing.

While Ali Baba went into his chamber, Morgiana went into the kitchen to fetch the broth and carry it to him; but before he would drink it, he first bid her satisfy his impatience, and tell him the story with all its circumstances; and she obeyed him.

Last night, sir, said she, When you were gone to bed, I got your bathing-linen ready, and gave it to Abdallah; afterwards I set on the pot for the broth, and as I was skimming the pot, the lamp, for want of oil, went out; and as there was not a drop more in the house, I looked for a candle, but could not find one. Abdallah, seeing me vexed, put me in mind of the jars of oil which stood in the yard. I took the oil-pot, and went directly to the jar which stood nearest to me; and when I came to it, I heard a voice within it say: Is it time? Without being dismayed, and comprehending immediately the malicious intention of the pretended oil-merchant, I answered: Not yet, but presently. Then I went to the next, and another voice asked me the same question, and I returned the same answer; and so on, till I came to the last, which I found full of oil, with which I filled my pot.

When I considered that there were thirty-seven robbers in the yard, who only waited for a signal to be given by the captain, whom you took to be an oil-merchant, and entertained so handsomely, I thought there was no time to be lost: I carried my pot of oil into the kitchen, lighted the lamp, and afterwards took the biggest kettle I had, went and filled it full of oil, and set it on the fire to boil, and then went and poured as much into each jar as was sufficient to prevent them from executing the pernicious design they came about: after this I retired into the kitchen, and put out the lamp; but before I went to bed, I waited at the window to know what measures the pretended merchant would take.

After I had watched some time for the signal, he threw some stones out of the window against the jars, and neither hearing nor perceiving anybody stirring, after throwing three times, he came down, and I saw him go to every jar; after which, through the darkness of the night, I lost sight of him.

I waited some time longer, and finding that he did not return, I never doubted but that, seeing he had missed his aim, he had made his escape over the walls of the garden. Persuaded that the house was now safe, I went to bed.

This, said Morgiana, Is the account you asked of me; and I am convinced it is the consequence of an observation which I had made for two or three days before, but did not think fit to acquaint you with; for when I came in one morning early, I found our street-door marked with white chalk, and the next morning with red; and both times, without knowing what was the intention of those chalks, I marked two or three neighbours' doors on each hand after the same manner. If you reflect on this, and what has since happened, you will find it to be a plot of the robbers of the forest, of whose gang there are two wanting, and now they are reduced to three: all this shows that they had sworn your destruction, and it is proper you should stand upon your guard, while there is one of them alive: for my part I shall not neglect anything necessary to your preservation, as I am in duty bound.

When Morgiana had left off speaking, Ali Baba was so sensible of the great service she had done him, that he said to her: I will not die without rewarding you as you deserve; I owe my life to you, and for the first token of my acknowledgment I will give you your liberty from this moment, till I can complete your recompense as I intend. I am persuaded with you that the forty robbers have laid all manner of snares for me: God, by your means, has delivered me from them, and I hope will continue to preserve me from their wicked designs; and, by averting the danger which threatened me, will deliver the world from their persecution and their cursed race. All that we have to do is to bury the bodies of these pests of mankind immediately, and with all the secrecy imaginable, that nobody may suspect what has become of them. But that Abdallah and I will undertake.

Ali Baba's garden was very long, and shaded at the farther end by a great number of large trees. Under these trees he and the slave went and dug a trench, long and wide enough to hold all the robbers; and as the earth was light, they were not long doing it. Afterwards they lifted the bodies out of the jars, took away their weapons, carried them to the end

of the garden, laid them in the trench, and levelled the ground again. When this was done, Ali Baba hid the jars and weapons; and as for the mules, as he had no occasion for them, he sent them at different times to be sold in the market by his slave.

When Ali Baba took these measures to prevent the public from knowing how he came by his riches in so short a time, the captain of the forty robbers returned to the forest, in most inconceivable mortification; and in the agitation, or rather confusion, he was in at his success, so contrary to what he had promised himself, he entered the cave, not being able, all the way from the town, to come to any resolution what to do to Ali Baba.

The loneliness of the dark place seemed frightful to him. Where are you, my brave lads, cried he, Old companions of my watchings, inroads, and labour? What can I do without you? Did I collect you to lose you by so base a fate, and one so unworthy your courage? Had you died with your sabres in your hands, like brave men, my regret had been less! When shall I get so gallant a troop again? And if I could, can I undertake it without exposing so much gold and treasure to him, who hath already enriched himself out of it? I cannot, I ought not to think of it, before I have taken away his life. I will undertake that myself, which I could not accomplish with so powerful assistance; and when I have taken care to secure this treasure from being pillaged, I will provide for it new masters and successors after me, who shall preserve and augment it to all posterity. This resolution being taken, he was not at a loss how to execute it; but, easy in his mind, and full of hopes, he slept all that night very quietly.

When he awoke early next morning, as he had proposed, he dressed himself, agreeably to the project he had in his head, and went to the town, and took a lodging in a khan. And as he expected what had happened at Ali Baba's might make a great noise in the town, he asked his host, by way of discourse, what news there was in the city. Upon which the innkeeper told him a great many things, which did not concern him in the least. He judged by this that the reason why Ali Baba kept this affair so secret was for fear people should know where the treasure lay, and the means of coming at it;

and because he knew his life would be sought upon account of it. And this urged him the more to neglect nothing to rid himself of so dangerous a person.

The next thing that the captain had to do was to provide himself with a horse, to convey a great many sorts of rich stuffs and fine linen to his lodging, which he did by a great many journeys to the forest, but with all the necessary precautions imaginable to conceal the place whence he brought them. In order to dispose of the merchandises, when he had amassed them together, he took a furnished shop, which happened to be opposite to that which was Cassim's, which Ali Baba's son had not long occupied.

He took upon him the name of Cogia Houssain; and as a newcomer, was, according to custom, extremely civil and complaisant to all the merchants his neighbours. And as Ali Baba's son was young and handsome, and a man of good sense, and was often obliged to converse with Cogia Houssain, he soon made them acquainted with him. He strove to cultivate his friendship, more particularly when, two or three days after he was settled, he recognized Ali Baba, who came to see his son, and stopped to talk with him as he was accustomed to do; and when he was gone, he learned from his son who he was. He increased his assiduities, caressed him after the most engaging manner, made him some small presents, and often asked him to dine and sup with him; and treated him very handsomely.

Ali Baba's son did not care to lie under such obligation to Cogia Houssain without making the like return; but was so much straitened for want of room in his house, that he could not entertain him so well as he wished; and therefore acquainted his father, Ali Baba, with his intention, and told him that it did not look well for him to receive such favours from Cogia Houssain without inviting him again.

Ali Baba, with great pleasure, took the treat upon himself. Son, said he, To-morrow (Friday), which is a day that the shops of such great merchants as Cogia Houssain and yourself are shut, get him to take a walk with you after dinner, and as you come back, pass by my door, and call in. It will look better to have it happen accidentally, than if you gave him a formal invitation. I will go and order Morgiana to provide a supper.

The next day, after dinner, Ali Baba's son and Cogia Houssain met by appointment, and took their walk; and as they returned, Ali Baba's son led Cogia Houssain through the street where his father lived; and when they came to the house, he stopped and knocked at the door. This, sir, said he, Is my father's house; who, upon the account I have given him of your friendship, charged me to procure him the honour of your acquaintance; and I desire you to add this pleasure to those I am already indebted to you for.

Though it was the sole aim of Cogia Houssain to introduce himself into Ali Baba's house, that he might kill him without hazarding his own life or making any noise, yet he excused himself, and offered to take his leave. But a slave having opened the door, Ali Baba's son took him obligingly by the hand, and in a manner forced him in.

Ali Baba received Cogia Houssain with a smiling countenance, and in the most obliging manner he could wish. He thanked him for all the favours he had done his son; adding withal, the obligation was the greater, as he was a young man not very well acquainted with the world, and that he might contribute to his information.

Cogia Houssain returned the compliment, by assuring Ali Baba that though his son might not have acquired the experience of older men, he had good sense equal to the experience of many others. After a little more conversation on different subjects, he offered again to take his leave; when Ali Baba, stopping him, said: Where are you going, sir, in so much haste? I beg you would do me the honour to sup with me, though what I have to give you is not worth your acceptance; but such as it is, I hope you will accept it as heartily as I give it.—Sir, replied Cogia Houssain, I am thoroughly persuaded of your good-will; and if I ask the favour of you not to take it ill that I do not accept of your obliging invitation, I beg of you to believe that it does not proceed from any slight or intention to affront, but from a certain reason, which you would approve of if you knew it.

And what may that reason be, sir, replied Ali Baba, If I may be so bold as to ask you?—It is, answered Cogia Houssain, That I can eat no victuals that have any salt in them; therefore judge how I should look at your table.—If that is the only reason, said Ali Baba, It ought not to deprive me of

honour of your company at supper; for, in the first place, re is no salt ever put into my bread, and for the meat we l have to-night I promise you there shall be none. I will and take care of that. Therefore you must do me the our to stay; I will come again immediately.

Ali Baba went into the kitchen, and ordered Morgiana to no salt to the meat that was to be dressed that night; id to make quickly two or three ragouts besides what he had ordered, but be sure to put no salt in them.

Morgiana, who was always ready to obey her master, could not help, this time, seeming dissatisfied at his new order. Who is this difficult man, said she, Who eats no salt with his meat? Your supper will be spoiled, if I keep it back so long.—Do not be angry, Morgiana, replied Ali Baba, He is an honest man; therefore do as I bid you.

Morgiana obeyed, though with no little reluctance, and had a curiosity to see this man who eat no salt. To this end, when she had done what she had to do in the kitchen, and Abdallah laid the cloth, she helped to carry up the dishes; and looking at Cogia Houssain, knew him at the first sight to be the captain of the robbers, notwithstanding his disguise; and examining him very carefully, perceived that he had a dagger hid under his garment. I am not in the least amazed, said she to herself, That this wicked wretch, who is my master's greatest enemy, would eat no salt with him, since he intends to assassinate him; but I will prevent him.

When Morgiana had sent up the supper by Abdallah, while they were eating, she made the necessary preparations for executing one of the boldest acts which could be thought on; and had just done, when Abdallah came again for the dessert of fruit, which she carried up, and as soon as Abdallah had taken the meat away, set it upon the table: after that, she set a little table and three glasses by Ali Baba, and going out, took Abdallah along with her to go to supper together, and to give Ali Baba the more liberty of conversation with his guest.

Then the pretended Cogia Houssain, or rather captain of the robbers, thought he had a favourable opportunity to kill Ali Baba. I will, said he to himself, make the father and son both drunk; and then the son, whose life I intend to spare, will not be able to prevent my stabbing his father to the

heart; and while the slaves are at supper, or asleep in the kitchen, I can make my escape over the gardens as before.

Instead of going to supper, Morgiana, who penetrated into the intentions of the counterfeit Cogia Houssain, would not give him leave to put his villainous design in execution, but dressed herself neatly with a suitable head-dress like a dancer, girded her waist with a silver-gilt girdle, to which there hung a poniard with a hilt and guard of the same metal, and put a handsome mask on her face. When she had thus disguised herself, she said to Abdallah: Take your tabour, and let us go and divert our master and his son's guest, as we do sometimes when he is alone.

Abdallah took his tabour, and played before Morgiana all the way into the hall; who, when she came to the door, made a low curtsey, with a deliberate air, to make herself taken notice of, and by way of asking leave to show what she could do. Abdallah, seeing that his master had a mind to say something, left off playing. Come in, Morgiana, said Ali Baba, And let Cogia Houssain see what you can do, that he may tell us what he thinks of you. But, sir, said he, turning towards Cogia Houssain, Do not think that I put myself to any expense to give you this diversion, since these are my slave, and my cook and housekeeper; and I hope you will not find the entertainment they give us disagreeable.

Cogia Houssain, who did not expect this diversion after supper, began to fear that he should not have the opportunity that he thought he had found; but hoped, if he missed it now, to have it another time, by keeping up a friendly correspondence with the father and son; therefore, though he could have wished Ali Baba would have let it alone, he pretended to be obliged to him for it, and had the complaisance to express a pleasure at what he saw pleased his host.

As soon as Abdallah saw that Ali Baba and Cogia Houssain had done talking, he began to play on the tabour, and accompanied it with an air; to which Morgiana, who was an excellent dancer, danced after such a manner as would have created admiration in any other company but that before which she now exhibited, among whom, perhaps, none but the false Cogia Houssain was in the least attentive to her.

After she had danced several dances with the same propriety and strength, she drew the poniard, and holding it in

her hand, danced a dance, in which she outdid herself, by the many different figures and light movements, and the surprising leaps and wonderful exertions with which she accompanied it. Sometimes she presented the poniard to one's breast, and sometimes to another's, and oftentimes seeming to strike her own. At last, as if she was out of breath, she snatched the tabour from Abdallah with her left hand, and holding the dagger in her right, presented the other side of the tabour, after the manner of those who get a livelihood by dancing, and solicit the liberality of the spectators.

Ali Baba put a piece of gold into the tabour, as did also his son; and Cogia Houssain, seeing that she was coming to him, had pulled his purse out of his bosom to make her a present; but while he was putting his hand into it, Morgiana, with a courage and resolution worthy of herself, plunged the poniard into his heart.

Ali Baba and his son, frightened at this action, cried out aloud. Unhappy wretch! exclaimed Ali Baba, What have you done to ruin me and my family?—It was to preserve you, not to ruin you, answered Morgiana; For see here, said she (opening Cogia Houssain's garment, and showing the dagger), What an enemy you had entertained! Look well at him, and you will find him to be both the pretended oil-merchant and the captain of the gang of forty robbers. Remember, too, that he would eat no salt with you; and what would you have more to persuade you of his wicked design? Before I saw him, I suspected him as soon as you told me you had such a guest. I saw him, and you now find that my suspicion was not groundless.

Ali Baba, who immediately felt the new obligation he had to Morgiana for saving his life a second time, embraced her. Morgiana, said he, I gave you your liberty, and then promised you that my gratitude should not stop there, but that I would soon complete it. The time is come for me to give you a proof of it, by making you my daughter-in-law. Then addressing himself to his son, he said to him: I believe you, son, to be so dutiful a child, that you will not refuse Morgiana for your wife. You see that Cogia Houssain sought your friendship with a treacherous design to take away my life; and, if he had succeeded, there is no doubt but he would have sacrificed you also to his revenge. Consider, that by

marrying Morgiana, you marry the support of my family and your own.

The son, far from showing any dislike, readily consented to the marriage; not only because he would not disobey his father, but that his inclination prompted him to it.

After this, they thought of burying the captain of the robbers with his comrades, and did it so privately that nobody knew anything of it till a great many years after, when not any one had any concern in the publication of this remarkable history.

A few days afterwards, Ali Baba celebrated the nuptials of his son and Morgiana with great solemnity and a sumptuous feast, and the usual dancing and spectacles; and had the satisfaction to see that his friends and neighbours, whom he had invited, had no knowledge of the true motives of that marriage; but that those who were not acquainted with Morgiana's good qualities commended his generosity and goodness of heart.

Ali Baba forbore, a long time after this marriage, from going again to the robbers' cave, from the time he brought away his brother Cassim and some bags of gold on three asses, for fear of finding them there, and being surprised by them. He kept away after the death of the thirty-seven robbers and their captain, supposing the other two robbers, whom he could get no account of, might be alive.

But at the year's end, when he found they had not made any attempt to disturb him, he had the curiosity to make another journey, taking the necessary precautions for his safety. He mounted his horse, and when he came to the cave, and saw no footsteps of men or horses, he looked upon it as a good sign. He alighted off his horse and tied him to a tree; and presenting himself before the door, and pronouncing these words, *Open, Sesame,* the door opened. He went in, and by the condition he found things in, he judged that nobody had been there since the false Cogia Houssain, when he fetched the goods for his shop, and that the gang of forty robbers was completely destroyed, and never doubted he was the only person in the world who had the secret of opening the cave, and that all the treasure was solely at his disposal; and having brought with him a wallet, into which he put as much gold as his horse would carry, he returned to town.

Afterwards Ali Baba carried his son to the cave, taught him the secret, which they handed down to their posterity; and using their good fortune with moderation, lived in great honour and splendour, serving the greatest offices of the city.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

VI

1600 TO 1700:

Dialogos de Apacible Entretenimiento, G. L. Hidalgo (1610).
Novelas Exemplares, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1613).
Sylvanire, Honoré d'Urfé (1627).
Historiettes, Tallemant des Réaux (life: 1619–1692).
Nouvelles Tragi-Comiques, Paul Scarron (1654).
La Princesse de Montpensier, Mme. de La Fayette (1662).
*Contes, Jean de La Fontaine (1665–85).
* Fables, Jean de La Fontaine (1668–94).
Simplicianische Schriften, Grimmelshausen (about 1670–72).
Pentamerone, G. B. Basile (1672).
La Comtesse de Tende, Mme. de La Fayette (after 1678).
Oroonoko, Aphra Behn (1688).
The Fair Jilt, Aphra Behn (1688).
* Contes en Vers, Charles Perrault (1694).
Contes de ma Mère l'Oye, Charles Perrault (1697).
Contes de Fées, Catherine d'Aulnoy (1698).

THE LIBERAL LOVER

THE LIBERAL LOVER

THE LIBERAL LOVER is one of the Exemplary Novels, or tales, by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547–1616), first published in 1613. The Exemplary Novels, together with The Curious Impertinent and The Captive's Story, both inserted in Don Quixote, were composed by Cervantes during his sojourn in Seville, between 1588 and 1603.

The Novels were received throughout Europe almost as favourably as Don Quixote (1605–1615) had been. They soon became a fertile source whence dramatists and story-tellers could draw both plots and dialogue. Beaumont and Fletcher (or rather, the latter only), among others, profited by the volume, as the groundwork of The Chances, Love's Pilgrimage, and other comedies shows. Cervantes himself tells us that he resolved to call his stories *exemplary*, because, if any one will examine them, there is not one from which some useful moral may not be drawn. These tales of Cervantes, however, differ from the *moral* tales so commonly written in the eighteenth century, in that in them the morality is not given such undue prominence.

As may be supposed, the tales are not all of equal merit; The Liberal Lover is perhaps the best one of the lot. The narrative is based on some of the author's experiences when he was held captive by the Moors. After Don Quixote, the Exemplary Novels constitute Cervantes's chief claim to immortality. In the opinion of some Spanish critics, they are even superior to the famous romance in point of style.

James Mabbe, published in London in 1640, a garbled text of which has been wrongly ascribed to Thomas Shelton. Mabbe's version was published in London in a limited edition in 1900, under the editorship of Mr. S. W. Orson, and his reprint has been drawn on for the present volume. The text (says Mr. Orson) has been carefully collated with the original; and, though the spelling and punctuation have been modernised, and some gross printer's blunders corrected, no liberties have been taken with either language or grammar. Brief notes, on some passages which seem to require explanation, have been appended.

Mabbe's version is regarded as a model of racy and flowing English; the translation, too, has the supreme merit of reading like an original.

AUTHORITIES:

The Life of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, by James Fitzmaurice-Kelly.

A History of Spanish Literature, by George Ticknor.

The Life of Miguel de Cervantes, by Henry Edward Watts (Great Writers series).

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THE LIBERAL LOVER

"O the lamentable ruins of unhappy Nicosia![1] the blood of thy valiant and unfortunate defenders being yet scarce dry! If (as thou art senseless thereof) thou hadst any feeling at all in this desolate and woful estate wherein now we are, we might jointly bewail our misfortunes and that wretched estate and condition wherein we are; and happily having a companion in them, it would help to ease me in some sort of my torment, and make that burden of my grief the lighter, which I find so heavy—I had almost said insupportable—for me to bear. Yet there is some hope left unto thee, that these thy strong towers dismantled and laid level with the ground, thou mayst one day see them, though not in so just a defence as that wherein they were overthrown, raised to their former height and strength. But I, of all unfortunate the most unfortunate man, what good can I hope for in that miserable strait wherein I find myself, yea, though I should return to the same estate and condition wherein I was before I fell into this? Such is my misfortune that when I was free and at liberty I knew not what happiness was, and now in my thraldom and captivity I neither have it nor hope it."

These words did a Christian captive utter, looking with a sad and heavy countenance from the rising of a hill on the ruined walls of the late-lost Nicosia; and thus did he talk with them, and compared his miseries with theirs, as if they had been able to understand him (the common and proper condition of afflicted persons, who being violently carried away with their own feigned fancies and imaginary conceptions, do and say things beyond all reason, and without any good discourse and advisement).

Now, whilst he was thus discoursing with himself, from out a pavilion, or one of those tents pitched there in the

[1] *Nicosia*—a town of Cyprus, taken by the Turks in 1570.—[ED.]

field, not far from him, issued out a Turk, a handsome young man, of a good presence, an ingenious aspect, and accompanied with spirit and mettle answerable to his looks; who drawing near unto the Christian, without much ceremony, yet in a fair and civil way, said unto him: "Sir, I durst lay a wager with you that those your pensive thoughts which I read in your face have brought you hither."

"You read aright," answered Ricardo (for this was the captive's name); "they have brought me hither indeed. But what doth it avail me, since in no place whithersoever I go I am so far from procuring a peace that I cannot obtain a truce or any the least cessation of them? Nay, rather, these ruins which from hence discover themselves unto me have rather increased my sorrows."

"Those of Nicosia, you mean?" replied the Turk.

"What other should I mean?" answered Ricardo, "since there are no other which here offer themselves to my view?"

"You have great cause," quoth the Turk, "to weep if you entertain your thoughts with these and the like contemplations; for they who but some two years since had seen this famous and rich island of Cyprus in its prosperity and peaceable estate, the inhabitants thereof enjoying all that human happiness and felicity which the Heavens could grant unto men or themselves desire, and now to see them banished out of it or made miserable slaves in it, who can be so hard-hearted as to forbear from bewailing its calamity and misfortune? But let us leave talking of these things, since they are remediless, and let us come to your own bosom sorrows, for I desire to see if they be such as you voice them to be; and therefore I earnestly entreat and beseech you, and conjure thee by that which thou owest to those good offices I have done thee, the good-will I bear thee, the love I have shown thee, and by that which ought to oblige thee thereunto, in that we are both of one and the same country and bred up in our childhood together, that thou wilt deal freely with me, and lay open unto me what is the cause which makes thee so exceeding sad and melancholy. For howbeit captivity alone of itself be sufficient to grieve the stoutest heart in the world and to check its mirth, though otherwise naturally inclined thereunto, yet notwithstanding I imagine that the current of your disasters hath a farther reach and deeper bottom;

for generous minds such as thine is, do not use to yield and render up themselves to common and ordinary misfortunes in such a measure as to make show of extraordinary sorrows; and I am the rather induced to believe what I conceive because I know that you are not so poor but that you are well enough able to pay any reasonable ransom they shall require of you, nor are you clapped up in the towers of the Black Sea as a prisoner of note or captive of consideration, who late or never obtains his desired liberty, and therefore your ill fortune not having taken from you the hope of seeing yourself a free man; and yet notwithstanding all this, when I see thee so much overcharged with sorrows, and making such miserable manifestations of thy misfortunes, it is not much that I imagine that the pain proceeds from some other cause than thy lost liberty, which I entreat thee to acquaint me withal, offering thee all the assistance I am able to give thee. Perhaps, to the end that I may be serviceable unto thee, Fortune in her wheeling hath brought this about that I should be clad in this habit which I so much hate and abhor. Thou knowest already, Ricardo, that my master is Cadi of this city, which is the same as to be its Bishop; thou likewise knowest the great sway which he beareth here, and how much I am able to do with him; together with this, thou art not ignorant of the fervent desire and inflamed zeal which I have not to die in this estate which I thus seem to profess. But God knows my heart, and if ever I should come to be put to my trial, I am resolved openly to confess and in a loud voice to publish to the whole world the faith of Jesus Christ, from which my few years and less understanding separated me, though that I were sure that such a confession should cost me my life; for that I may free myself from losing that of my soul, I should think the losing of that of my body very well employed. Out of all this which hath been said unto thee, I leave it to thyself to infer the conclusion, and that thou wilt take it into thy deeper and better consideration whether my proffered friendship may be profitable and useful unto thee. Now that I may know what remedies thy misfortune requires, and what medicines I may apply both for the easing and curing of it, it is requisite that thou recount it unto me, the relation thereof being as necessary for me as that of the rich patient to his physician; assuring thee, in

the faith of a friend, that thou shalt deposit it in the deepest and darkest den of silence, never to come to light."

To all these words of his Ricardo gave an attentive ear, though his tongue were silent; but seeing himself obliged by them and his own necessity, returned him thereunto this answer: "If as thou hast hit the right vein, O my dear friend Mahamut [for so was this Turk called], touching that which thou imaginest of my misfortune, thou couldst hit as right upon its remedy, I should hold myself happy in my lost liberty, and would not change my unhappiness for the greatest happiness that may be imagined. But I wot well that it is such that all the world may take notice of the cause whence it proceedeth, but that man cannot therein be found which dare undertake not only the finding out of any remedy for it, but of giving it any the least ease; and to the end that thou mayst rest thyself thoroughly satisfied of the truth thereof, I will relate the same unto thee as briefly and compendiously as I can, shutting much in a few words. But before I enter into this confused labyrinth of my miseries, I would first have thee to recount unto me what is the cause why Azam Bashaw, my master, hath pitched here in this field these tents and pavilions before he maketh his entry into Nicosia, being deputed (and to that purpose bringing his provision with him) to be Viceroy there, or Bashaw, the usual style or title which the Turks give their Viceroys."

"I will," answered Mahamut, "answer your demand in a few words, and therefore would have you to know that it is a custom amongst the Turks that they who come to be Viceroys of some province do not instantly enter into the city where their predecessor resideth, till he issueth out of it, and leave the residence freely to his successors. Now, when the new Bashaw hath made his entrance, the old one stays without in the field, expecting what accusations shall come against him and what misdemeanours during his government they shall lay to his charge, which being alleged and proved, are recorded and a note taken of them, all possibility being taken away from him of interviewing, either to help himself by suborning of witnesses, or by his friends, unless he have made his way beforehand, for the clearing of himself. Now, the other being settled in his residency, there is given by him to him that leaves his charge, a scroll of parchment sealed

up very close, and therewith he presents himself at the gate of the Grand Signior—that is to say, in the court before the Grand Council of the Great Turk; which being seen and perused by the Visir-Bashaw, and by those other four inferior Bashaws, they either reward or punish him according to the relation that is made of his residency. In case that he come home faulty, with money he redeems and excuseth his punishment; but if faultless, and they do not reward him—as commonly it falleth out—with gifts and presents, he procureth that charge which himself most affecteth; for places of command and offices are not given for merit, but for money; all is sold, and all bought. They who have the provision, or, as we style it, commission and authority for the conferring of charges and offices, rob those which are to have these offices and charges, and fleece them as near as the shears can go; and they, again, out of this their bought office gather wealth and substance for to buy another which promiseth much more gain. All goes as I tell you; all this empire is violent[1]—a sign that it will not last long. For that reason, then, that I have rendered thee, thy master Azam Bashaw hath remained in this field four days; and he of Nicosia, that he hath not as yet come forth as he ought to have done, the cause is that he hath been very sick, but is now upon the mending hand, and will without fail come forth either to-day or to-morrow at the farthest, and is to lodge in certain tents which are pitched behind this rising hill, which as yet thou hast not seen; and thy master is forthwith to enter into the city. And having made this already delivered known unto thee is all the satisfaction that I can give to your propounded demand."

"Listen then unto me," replied Ricardo; "but I know not whether I shall be as good as my word in complying with that which I formerly promised, that I would in a few words recount unto you my misfortunes, they being so large that to make up the full measure of them I want words enough to do it; yet notwithstanding I will do herein what may be, and as time and your patience will permit. But let me first of all ask you if you know in our town of Trapana a damosel to whom fame hath given the name of the fairest woman

[1] *All this empire is violent*—that is, ruled not by justice but by force.—[ED.]

in all Sicily, in whose praise all curious tongues have spent themselves, and of whom the rarest judgments have ratified that she was the perfectest piece of beauty that the past age had, the present hath, and that which is to come can hope to have; one of whom the poets sang that her hairs were golden wires, her eyes two resplendent suns, and her cheeks pure damask roses, her teeth pearls, her lips rubies, her neck alabaster, and that her parts with the whole frame, and the whole with her parts, made up a most pleasing harmony and most harmonious concord, Nature spreading over the whole composure such a sweet delightfulness of colours, so natural and so perfect, that envy itself cannot tax her in any one particular. And is it possible, Mahamut, that all this while thou hast not told me yet who she is, and by what name she is called? I undoubtedly believe that either thou dost not hear me, or that when thou wast in Trapana thou didst want thy senses."

Mahamut hereunto answered: "That if she whom thou hast set forth with such extremes of beauty be not Leonisa, the daughter of Rodolphus Florencius, I know not who she is; for she alone had that fame which you speak of."

"This is she, O Mahamut," replied Ricardo; "this is she O my dear friend, who is the principal cause of all my felicity and of all my misfortune. This is she, and not my lost liberty, for whom mine eyes have, do, and shall shed tears not to be numbered; this is she for whom my heart-burning sighs inflame the air far and near; and this is she for whom my words weary Heaven which hears them, and the ears of those which hearken unto them. This is she for whom thou tookest me to be mad, or at least for a man of small worth and less courage. This Leonisa, to me a lioness, and to another a meek and gentle lamb, is she which holds me in this wretched and miserable estate; for I must give thee to understand that from my tender years, or at least ever since I had the use of reason, I did not only love but adore her, and did serve her with such solicitude and devotion as if neither on earth nor in heaven there were any other deity for me to serve and adore save herself. Her kinsfolk and parents knew my desires, considering withal that they were directed to an honest and virtuous end; and that therefore, many a time and oft, which escaped not my knowledge, they acquainted Leon

with the fervent love and affection I bare unto her, for the better disposing of her will to accept me for her husband. But she, who had placed her eyes on Cornelio, the son of Ascanio Rotulo (whom you know very well, a young gallant, neat and spruce, with white hands and curled hairs, having a mellifluous voice, and amorous words at will, and in a word, being all made of amber, musk, and civet, clad in tissue, adorned with rich embroideries), would not vouchsafe to cast so much as one glance of her eye on my countenance, which was not so delicate as that of Cornelio, neither would entertain, notwithstanding my best endeavours to please her, with thankfulness my many and continual services, requiting my good-will with disdain and hatred. And to such extremes did the excess of my love bring me, that I should have held myself happy had her disdains and unkindnesses killed me outright, that I might not have lived to have seen her confer such open though honest favours on Cornelio. Consider now, being anguished with disdain and hatred, and almost mad with the cruel rage of jealousy, in what miserable case you may imagine my soul was, two such mortal plagues reigning therein. Leonisa's parents dissembled those favours which she did to Cornelio, believing, as they had good reason to believe it, that the young man, attracted by her most exquisite and incomparable beauty, which none could match but her own, would make choice of her for his spouse, and so in him gain a richer son-in-law than in me: and well, if he were so, might he be so. But I dare be bold to say, without arrogancy be it spoken, that as good blood runs in my veins as his, my quality and condition nothing inferior to his; and for his mind, it cannot be more noble than mine, nor his valour go beyond mine. But that indeed which did overbalance me was Leonisa's favour and her parents' furthering the business, and this only made the scales uneven by their inclining to Cornelio. Now it so fell out, that persisting in the pursuit of my pretensions, it came to my knowledge that one day in the month of May last past, which this very day makes up a year, three days, and five hours, Leonisa, her parents, and Cornelio and some friends of his, went to solace themselves, accompanied with their kindred and servants, to Ascanio his garden, near adjoining to the seaside, in the way that leads to the salt-pits."

"I know that place passing well," said Mahamut; "go on, Ricardo. I was more than four days in one of them; I could have wished I had been there but four minutes."

"I knew that," replied Ricardo, "and in that very instan that I knew it my soul was possessed with such a fury, suc a rage, and such a hell of jealousies, and with that vehemenc and rigour, that it bereaved me of my senses, as thou shal plainly see, by that which I presently did, which was this I hied me to the garden where I was told they were, wher I found most of the company solacing themselves, and Cor nelio and Leonisa sitting under a walnut-tree, somewhat ou of the way from the rest. How my sight pleased them I d not know, but know, to say so much of myself, that her sigh wrought so upon me that I lost the sight of mine own eyes and stood stock still like a statua, without either voice or mo tion. But I continued not long so before that my ange awakened my choler, choler heated my blood, my blood in flamed rage, and rage gave motion to my hands and tongue Howbeit my hands were bound by the respect which, me thought, was due to that fair face which I had before me but my tongue breaking silence, vented forth these words 'How canst thou find in thy heart, how give thyself content O thou mortal enemy of my rest! in having (and therein taking so much pleasure) before thine eyes the cause whic must make mine to overflow with rivers of tears, and by m continual weeping become another deluge? Come, come— cruel as thou art!—a little nearer, and wreathe thy twinin ivy about this unprofitable trunk, which woos thy embracing= Let him lay his head in thy lap, and let thy fingers learn t play with those braided locks of this thy new Ganymede What thou wilt do, do quickly; make an end at once of deliv- ering up the possession of thyself to the green and ungoverned years of this your minion, to the end that I, losing all hope of obtaining thee, may together with that end this my life, so much by me abhorred. Thinkest thou, peradventure, thou proud and ill-advised damosel! that this young princox, pre- sumptuous by reason of his riches, arrogant by your gracing of him, unexperienced in that he is too young, and insolen by his relying on his lineage, will love as he ought, and you deserve? No, he cannot; no, he knows not how to love con- stantly, nor to esteem that which is inestimable, nor com

to have that understanding and knowledge which accompanies ripe and experimented years. If you think so, do not think it; for the world hath no other good thing save the doing of its actions always after one and the same manner; for none are deceived but by their own ignorance. In young men there is much inconstancy; in rich, pride; vanity in the arrogant; in the beautiful, disdain; and in those that have all these, foolishness, which is the mother of all ill success. And thou, O young gallant! art such a one who thinkest to carry all before thee, and to go clear away with that reward which is more due to my good desires than thy idle protestations. Why dost thou not arise from that carpet of flowers whereon thou liest, and come to take this my soul from me, which so deadly hateth thine? Not because thou offendest me in that which thou doest, but because thou knowest not how to esteem that good which fortune gives thee; and it is clear and evident that thou makest little reckoning of it, since thou wilt not rise up to defend it, that thou mayest not put thyself to the hazard of discomposing that painted composure of thy gay clothes. If Achilles had had thy reposed condition, or been of thy cold temper, Ulysses might very well have been assured that he would not have gone through with that which he undertook. Go, get thee gone, and sport thyself amongst thy mother's maids, and there have a care of kembing and curling thy locks, and keeping thy hands clean and white; thou art fitter to handle soft silks than a hard-hilted sword.' All these words could not move Cornelio to rise from the place where I found him, but sate him still, looking upon me as one aghast, not once offering to stir. But the voice wherewith I uttered these words which you have heard occasioned the people which were walking in the garden to draw nearer, stood a little while listening, hearing many other disgraceful speeches which I gave him, and thereupon made in; who, taking courage by their coming (for all or most of them were his kinsfolk, servants, or friends), he made show of rising; but before he was fully upon his feet I laid hand on my sword, drew it, and did set not only upon him, but on as many as were there. Leonisa no sooner saw my glittering sword but she fell into a deadly swound, which did put greater courage into me, and stir up greater despite; and I cannot say whether those so many

which did set upon me sought only to defend themselves, as we see men usually do against a furious madman, or whether it were my good fortune and diligence, or Heaven's disposing, to expose me to greater evils, and to reserve me to further miseries; in conclusion, I wounded seven or eight of them which came next to my hand. Cornelio betook himself to his heels, and by his swift flight escaped my hands. Being in this so manifest a danger hemmed in by my enemies, who now, seeing their blood run from them, and enraged with the wrong which they had received, sought to revenge themselves upon me, lo! Fortune provided a remedy for this mischief, but such a one as was worse than the disease; for better had it been for me there to have left my life, than in restoring it me by so strange and unexpected a means, to come to lose it every hour a thousand and a thousand times over and over. And this it was, that on the sudden there rushed into the garden a great number of Turks, pirates of Biserta, who with two galleys had put into a little creek of the sea between two rocks hard by the shore, where they disembarked themselves without being heard or seen by the sentinels of the watch-towers, nor discovered by those scouts whose daily office it was to scour the coasts and see that all was clear. When my adversaries had espied them, leaving me alone, they, with the rest in the garden, ran their way as fast as their legs would carry them, and shifted so well for themselves that they had got themselves out of their danger and put themselves in safety; so that of all the whole companies the Turks took no more captives but three persons besides Leonisa, who lay there still in a swound. They took me after they had shrewdly wounded me in four several places, revenged before by me on four Turks whom I left dead in the place. This assault ended, the Turks with their accustomed diligence, and not being very well pleased with the success, made haste to embark themselves, and presently put farther to sea, so that what with their sails and help of their oars, in a short space they recovered Fabiana, where they mustered their men, and finding that the slain were four soldiers, Levant-men, as they call them, being of the best and choicest and of most esteem amongst them, they were the more willing and desirous to take their revenge of me, and therefore the admiral of the captain-galley commanded them

to hang me up on the mainyard. All this while Leonisa stood looking on this speedy preparation for my death (who was now come again to herself), and seeing me in the power of these pirates, the tears trickled down in great abundance from her beauteous eyes, and wringing her soft and delicate hands, not speaking so much as one word, gave diligent ear and was very attentive to hear if she could understand what the Turks said. But one of the Christian slaves that was chained to the oar spake to her in Italian, giving her to understand how that the captain had given order to have that Christian hanged up (pointing unto me), because I had slain in her defence four of the best soldiers belonging to his galleys; which being heard and understood by Leonisa (being the first time that ever she showed herself pitiful towards me), she willed the said slave that he should speak unto the Turks to spare his life, and not to hang him, for in so doing they would lose a great ransom, and that he should advise them to tack about and make again for Trapana, where his ransom would presently be brought aboard unto them. This, I say, was the first and the last kindness which Leonisa used towards me, and all this for my greater ill. The Turks hearing what their captive told them, did easily believe him, and this their hope of profit turned the course of their choler. The very next morning, hanging out a flag of peace, they anchored before Trapana. That night thou mayst better conceive than I utter with what a deal of grief I passed it over, not so much for my wounds' sake, though they were very sore and painful, as to think on the peril wherein my cruel enemy was amongst these barbarous people. Being come now, as I told thee, to the city, one of the galleys entered the haven, the other stood off. All the citizens flocked to the seaside, the Christians standing as thick one by another as the shore would give them leave. And that carpet-knight[1] Cornelio stood afar off observing what passed in the galley whilst my steward was treating of my ransom; to whom I had given order that he should in no wise treat of my liberty, but of that of Leonisa, and that he should give for the freeing of

[1] *Carpet-knight*—one knighted at court as a favourite, not on account of valour in the field. See Twelfth Night, iii. 4, 257; and Fairfax's Tasso, xvi. 32.—[ED.]

her all whatsoever I was worth either in lands or goods; and I willed him, moreover, that he should go ashore and tell Leonisa's parents that they should leave it to him to treat of their daughter's liberty. This being done, the chief captain, who was a Grecian, but a renegado, his name Ysuph, demanded for Leonisa six thousand crowns, and for myself four thousand, and that he would not sell the one without the other; setting this so great a price, as I was given afterwards to understand, because he was enamoured of Leonisa, and was therefore unwilling she should be redeemed; purposing to give to the captain of the other galley, with whom he was to share the one half of the prize, myself at the rate of four thousand crowns in ready money, and one thousand more in other commodities, which made up five thousand, prizing Leonisa at other five thousand; and this was the reason why he rated us two in ten thousand crowns. Leonisa's parents offered him nothing on their part, relying on the promise which on my part my steward had made them; neither did Cornelio so much as once open his lips to offer anything towards her ransom; and so, after many demands and answers, my steward concluded the business with giving for Leonisa five thousand and for me three thousand crowns. Ysuph accepted this offer, forced thereunto by the persuasions of his companion and all the rest of their soldiers. But because my steward had not so much money in cash, he entreated only three days' time to make up the full sum, with intention to sell my goods under hand and at a cheap rate, till he had got so much together as would pay the ransom. Ysuph was glad of this, thinking with himself in the meanwhile to find some occasion that the bargain might not go forward; and so returning back again to the island of Fabiana, he said that by that time the three days were expired he would not fail to be there with them to receive the money according to the agreement. But spiteful and ungrateful Fortune, not yet wearied out with ill-entreating me, had so ordained it that a galley's boy, who sate on the top of the mast as the Turks' sentinel, discovered afar off at sea six Italian galleys, and did guess (which was true) that they were either of Malta or Sicily. He came running down with all the haste he could to give them news thereof, and in a trice the Turks embarked themselves who were ashore, some

dressing their dinner, some washing their linen, and weighing anchor in an instant, hoisting sail and working hard with their oars, turning their prows towards Barbary, in less than two hours they lost the sight of those galleys, and so being shadowed with the island, and covered from ken by the approaching night, they were secured from that fear which affrighted them. Now I leave it to thy good consideration, my friend Mahamut, how much my mind was troubled in this voyage, finding it to fall out so cross and contrary to that which I expected; and much more when, the next day, the two galleys reaching the island of Pantanalea on the south part, the Turks went ashore to get them wood and fresh victuals; but most of all, when I saw both the captains land, and fell to sharing between them in equal proportion all those prizes they had taken, each action of these was to me a delayed death. Coming then at last to the dividing of myself and Leonisa, Ysuph gave to Fetala (for so was that captain of the other galley called) six Christians, four for the oar, and two very beautiful boys, both naturals of Corso,[1] and myself likewise with them, that he might have Leonisa for himself; wherewith Fetala rested very well contented. And albeit I were present at all this, I could not understand what they said, though I knew what they did; neither had I known then the manner of their sharings if Fetala had not come unto me and told me in Italian: 'Christian, thou art now mine, and put into my hands as my captive, thou being rated at two thousand crowns; if thou wilt have thy liberty, thou must give me four thousand, or resolve here to end thy days.' I then demanded of him whether the Christian damosel were his too; he told me no, but that Ysuph kept her for himself, with intention to make her turn Moor and then marry her. And therein he said true, for one of the galley-slaves told me that sate chained on his bank at his oar, and understood very well the Turkish language, that he overheard Ysuph and Fetala treating thereof. Whereupon I came to my master and told him: 'Sir, if you will bring the business so about that the Christian damosel may become your captive, I will give you ten thousand crowns in good gold for her ransom.' He replied: 'It is not possible, but I will acquaint Ysuph

[1] *Corso*—Corsica.—[ED.]

with this great sum which thou offerest for her freedom, and perhaps, weighing the profit he shall reap thereby, he will alter his purpose, and accept of the ransom.' He did so; and then presently commanded all those of his own galley to embark themselves as soon as possibly they could, because he would go for Tripoli in Barbary, whence he was. And Ysuph likewise determined to go for Biserta, and so embarked with the selfsame haste as they use to do when they ken either galleys which they fear or vessels which they mind to rob; and that which moved them to make the more haste was that they saw the weather began to change, with manifest signs of a storm. Leonisa was on land, but not there where I might see her, save only at the time of her embarking, where we both met at the seaside. This her new lover led her by the hand, and setting her foot upon the plank which reached from the land to the galley, she turned back her eyes to look upon me, and mine, which never were off from her, looked wishly on her, but with such tenderness, that without knowing how such a cloud was cast before them, that it took away my eyesight, and being robbed of it and of my senses, I fell in a swound to the ground. The like they afterwards told me befell Leonisa; for they saw her fall from the plank into the sea, and that Ysuph leapt in after her, and brought her out thence in his arms. This was told me by those of my master's galley, whereinto they had put me, I not knowing how I came there. But when I came again to myself, and saw myself alone in that galley, and the other steering a contrary course and gone clean out of sight from us, carrying away with them the one half of my soul, or, to say better, all of it, my heart was clouded anew, and I began anew to curse my misfortune, and called out aloud for death. And such and so great was the moan and lamentation I made, that my master's ears being offended therewith, threatened with a great cudgel that if I did not hold my peace he would severely punish me; whereupon I repressed my tears and smothered my sighs, thinking that the violent restraining of them would break out the more forcibly in some one part or other, and open a door to let my soul out, which I so earnestly desired might relinquish this my miserable body. But froward Fortune not contenting herself to have put me into this so narrow a strait, took a course to overthrow all by

taking from me all hope of remedy; for in an instant the storm we so much feared overtook us, and the wind, which blew strongly from the south, blew full in the teeth of us, and began with such fury to reinforce itself that we were forced to tack about, putting the prow in the poop's place, suffering our galley to go which way the wind would carry her. Our captain's design was, by fetching of boards,[1] to have put into some part of the island for shelter, and more particularly on the north part thereof; but it fell not out answerably to his expectation, but rather quite contrary to what he had designed; for the wind charged us with such impetuousness that [despite] all that which we had sailed in two days, within little more than fourteen hours we saw ourselves within two leagues or thereabout of the same island from whence he had put forth; and now there was no remedy for hindering our being driven upon it, and not to run ourselves upon some sandy shore, but amongst very high rocks, which presented themselves to our view, threatening inevitable death to our lives. We saw on the one side of us that other our fellow-galley wherein was Leonisa, and all their Turks, and captive-rowers labouring hard with their oars to keep themselves off as well as they could from running upon the rocks. The like did we in ours, but with better success it should seem, and greater force and strength than the other, who, being tired out with their travail, and overcome by the stiffness of the wind and blustering storm, forsaking their oars, and with them abandoning themselves, they suffered themselves, we looking upon them, to fall amongst the rocks, against which the galley dashing itself, was split in a thousand pieces. Night was then drawing on, and so great was the cry of those that gave themselves for lost, and the fright of those who in our vessel feared to be lost, that not any one of those many things which our captain commanded was either understood or done by them; only they did attend the not foregoing of their oars, plying them still, holding it for their best remedy to turn the prow to the wind and to cast two anchors into the sea, to keep off death for a while, which they held to be certain. And although the fear of dying was general in all of

[1] *Fetching of boards*—tacking to and fro. Cf. the word *starboard*, etc.—[ED.]

them, yet in me was it quite contrary; for, fed with the deceitful hope of seeing her in that other world who was so lately departed out of this, every minute that the galley deferred its drowning or splitting against the rocks was to me an age of a more painful death. The high-swollen waves which passed over the top of our weather-beaten vessel and my head made me very watchful to see whether or no I could espy floating upon those crump-shouldered billows the body of unfortunate Leonisa. But I will not detain myself now, O Mahamut, in recounting unto thee piece by piece the passions, the fears, the anguishes, the thoughts, which in that tedious and terrible night I had and passed, that I may not go against that which before I propounded and promised, in relating briefly unto thee my misfortune. Suffice it that they were such and so great that if Death had come to me at that time, he needed not to have taken any great pains in taking away my life. Day appeared, but with appearance of a far greater storm than the former, and we found that our vessel lay riding out at sea, and a good ways off from the rocks; and having descried a point of the island, and perceiving that we might easily double it, both Turks and Christians began to be of good cheer, taking new hopes and new hearts unto them, fell anew to their work; in six hours we doubled the point, and found the sea more calm and quiet, insomuch that with a great deal more ease they could handle and use their oars; and coming under lee of the island, the Turks leapt out to land, and went to see if there were any relics remaining of the galley which the night before fell on the rocks. But even then, too, would not Fortune be so favourable unto me as to give me that poor comfort which I hoped to have had of seeing Leonisa's body in these my arms, which though dead and broken I would have been glad to have seen it, for to break that impossibility which my star had put upon me of linking myself therewith, as my desires well deserved, and therefore entreated one of the renegadoes to disembark himself to go in search thereof, and to see if the rolling of the sea had cast her on the shore. But, as I told thee, all this did Heaven deny me; and just in that very instant the wind began to rise and the sea grow rough, so that the shelter of that island was not of any benefit at all unto us. Fetala, seeing this, would not strive against Fortune, who had so violently persecuted

him, and therefore commanded them to right and fit the galley to bear a little sail, and to turn the prow to the seaward and the poop to the windward; and he himself taking charge of the rudder, sate at the helm, suffering her to run through the wide sea, being well assured that no impediment would cross its course. The oars bare themselves very even, being seated very orderly on their banks, and all the rest of the company got them into the hold underneath the hatches, so that there was not a man to be seen on the deck save the master, who for his more safety caused himself to be bound fast to his seat, giving thence direction to the rowers for the better governing and guiding of the vessel, which made its way with that swiftness that in three days and three nights, passing in sight of Trapana, of Melazo, and Palermo, she imboked[1] by the Pharos of Messina, to the wonderful fear of those that were in her, and of those likewise which beheld them on the land. In fine, not to be tedious in recounting unto thee the terribleness of this tempest, which is beyond all expression, I say, that being weary, hungry, and tired out with such a large compass about as was the rounding of almost all the whole island of Sicily, we arrived at Tripoli in Barbary, where my master (before that he had reckoned with his Levant-men, shared out the spoils, and given that unto them which was their due, and a fifth to the King, as the custom is) fell sick of a pleurisy, accompanied with a burning fever, in that violent manner that within three days it sent him packing to hell. The King of Tripoli seized presently upon all his goods, and the Alcaide de los Muertos, which is an office of inquiry concerning the dead, substituted by the Great Turk, who, as you know, is heir[2] to those that are his natural subjects after their deaths. These two possessed themselves of all my master Fetala's wealth, and I fell into the hands of him who was the Viceroy of Tripoli, and within fifteen days after he received his patent for Cyprus, with whom, you see, I am come hither, but without any intention at all to ransom myself, though he hath often told me that I should if I would, and wondered why I did not do it all this while, being, as Fetala's

[1] *Imboked*—embogued, passed into the strait.—[ED.]

[2] *Heir*—more correctly, inherits the goods of those who die without heirs.—[ED.]

soldiers told him, a principal person and a man of good means in his own country; but I was so far from entertaining that motion that I told him that they had misinformed him of my fortunes. And if thou wilt, Mahamut, that I acquaint thee truly with what I think, know thou then that I will never return back again to that place, where I can no ways receive any comfort, and where Leonisa's death will in part, if not wholly, be imputed unto me. What pleasure then can I take either there or here, in this my thraldom, though I must confess that the remembrance of her loss is more grievous unto me than a thousand captivities? And if it be true that continual sorrows must of force have an end, or end him who suffers them, mine cannot choose but do it, for I am resolved to give them such a loose rein that within a few days they shall give an end to this my miserable life, which I hold so much against my will. This, O my brother Mahamut, is my sad success; this is the cause of these my sighs and tears. Behold now and consider if this be not sufficient for to halt the one from out the deepest bottom of my bowels, and to exhale the other from out my afflicted and tormented bosom. Leonisa is dead, and with her my hope; and though that which I had (she living) hung but by a small and slender thread, yet—yet"— And with this "yet" his tongue clave so close to the roof of his mouth that he could not speak one word more, nor refrain from weeping, whose tears, drop after drop, one overtaking another, trickled down his face in such abundance that the ground was all wet whereon they fell. Mahamut accompanied those with his tears.

But this paroxysm being over-past, caused by relating this sad story and calling to mind his lost Leonisa, Mahamut was very willing, and withal went about to comfort him all that he could, with as good terms and persuasions as possibly he could devise. But Ricardo did cut him short of telling him: "That which thou art, my dear friend, to do is, that thou wilt advise me what course I shall take for to fall into disgrace with my master, and with all those with whom I shall converse, that being hated and abhorred by him and by them, the one and the other might ill-entreat me, and persecute me in such sort that, adding sorrow to sorrow, I may speedily obtain that which I so earnestly desire, which is, to end my life."

"Now I find that to be true," said Mahamut, "which is commonly spoken: 'Lo que se sabe sentir, se sabe decir — He that knows his grief, knows how to speak it—though sometimes it so happeneth that it maketh the tongue dumb. But howsoever it be, whether thy sorrows reach to thy words, or thy words outgo thy sorrows, thou shalt ever, Ricardo, find me thy true friend either for assistance or for counsel; for albeit my few years and the inconsiderateness which I have committed in putting myself into this habit may cry out against me that of neither of these two things which I offer thee thou mayst have any confidence or hope, yet will I endeavour to the utmost of my power that this suspicion may not prove true, nor any such opinion be held for certain. And albeit thou wilt not neither be advised nor assisted by me, yet will I not leave off doing that which shall be fitting and convenient for thee; as good physicians use to deal with their sick patients, who do not give them that which they crave, but what they think convenient for them to have. There is not any in all this city that can do or prevail more than the Cadi my master; no, not even thine, who comes to be Viceroy thereof, is so powerful as he. This being so as it is, I dare be bold to say that I am the man that can do most in this city, because I can do whatsoever I will with my master. I speak this, because it may be I shall so plot the business with him, and bring it so handsomely about, that thou mayst come to be his; and being in my company, time will teach us that which we are to do, as well for to comfort thee, if thou wilt or canst be comforted, as likewise for myself to get out of this to a better life, or at least to some place where it may be more safe when I leave this."

"I kindly thank you, Mahamut," replied Ricardo, "for your proffered friendship, though sure I am that when thou hast done all thou canst do, thou canst not do anything that can do me any good. But let us now give over this discourse and make towards the tents; for, if my eyesight deceive me not, I see a great press of people coming out of the city, and doubtless it is the old Viceroy, who comes forth into the field for to give place unto my master, that he may enter the city to make his residence."

"It is even so," said Mahamut. "Come along with me, Ricardo, and thou shalt see the ceremonies wherewith they

receive him, for I know thou wilt take pleasure in seeing them."

"With a very good will," answered Ricardo; "for peradventure I shall have need of thee, if happily the guardian of my master's captives should happen to meet with me, who is a renegado, and by birth of Corso, but of no very pitiful and tender bowels."

Here they left off any further communication, and came to the tents just at that very instant as the old Bashaw came thither, and the new one came forth to receive him at the door of the tent. Ali Bashaw (for so was he called who left the government) came accompanied with all the Janizaries, being the ordinary garrison soldiers in Nicosia ever since the Turks were masters of it, being to the number of five hundred. They came in two wings or files, the one with their muskets and the others with naked cimeters. They came to the tent of the new Bashaw Hazan, rounding it from one side at the door thereof till they met at the other, where Ali Bashaw, bowing his body, made a lowly reverence to Hazan; and he, with a less inclining himself, re-saluted him.

This done, Ali presently entered into Hazan's pavilion, where the Turks presently mounted him upon a proud horse, with wondrous rich furniture, and conducting him round about the tents and a good part of the field, clamouring out with loud acclamations in their own language: "Long live Solyman Sultan, and Hazan Bashaw in his name!" They repeated this very often, reinforcing their voices and vociferations, and then presently returned back again to the tent where Ali Bashaw remained, who with the Cadi and Hazan shut themselves up close for the space of one hour all alone. Mahamut then told Ricardo that they had thus retired themselves to treat of that which was fit to be done in the city touching such businesses as were commenced but not finished by Ali. Within a little while after the Cadi came forth to the door of the tent, and said with a loud voice in the Turkish, Arabic, and Greek tongue: "That all they who would enter to crave justice or to lay any other matter against Ali Bashaw might have free entrance; for there was Hazan Bashaw, whom the Grand Signior hath sent for Viceroy of Cyprus, who would do them all right and justice." This license being given, the Janizaries left the door of the tent

disoccupied, and gave way to such as would enter in. Mahamut wrought Ricardo to go in with him, who, for that they were Hazan's slaves, had without any hindrance free access thereunto.

There entered to crave justice some Greek Christians and some Turks, but all of them charging him with such trifling things and of so small moment that the Cadi despatched most of them without giving a copy to the defendant, without further examination, demands, and answers; for all causes, unless they be matrimonial, are despatched in an instant, more by the judgment of a good understanding man than the quirks of law. And among these Barbarians (if they be so in this particular) the Cadi is the competent judge of all causes, who doth abbreviate them and determine them in the turning of a hand, and forthwith pronounceth sentence, without any appealing therefrom to any other tribunal.

In this interim entered in a Chauz, which is as it were an Alquazil, and said that there was a Jew at the tent door who had brought to be sold a most fair and beautiful Christian; the Cadi commanded that they should bid him come in. The Chauz went forth, and presently came in again, leading the way to a venerable Jew, who led by the hand a woman in a Barbary habit, so well made and set forth that the richest Moor in Fez or Morocco was not able to compare therewith, for in her whole dress throughout she surpassed all the African women; yea, though even those of Argiers should have presented themselves there with all their pearls and rich embroideries. She came in having her face covered with a scarf of crimson taffeta; about the smalls of her legs (which discovered themselves) there appeared two golden chains of pure burnished gold; and on her arms, which likewise through a smock of sendall, or thin taffeta sarcenet were transparent, and showed themselves to the searching curious eyes of the beholders, she ware two bracelets of gold, wherein were set scatteringly here and there many fair pearls and precious stones. In conclusion, the fashion of her clothes and all other habiliments about her were such that she presented herself before them most richly and gorgeously attired.

The Cadi and the other two Bashaws upon the very first sight of her being mightily taken, before any other thing was

said or questioned by them, they willed the Jew that he should take the scarf from off the Christian's face. He did so, and withal did discover such a splendour and such a beautiful countenance as did dazzle the eyes and glad the hearts of all the standers-by. As the sun scarfed with clouds after much darkness offers itself to the eyes of those who long for its desired presence, such and no otherwise than such was the beauty of this captived Christian in this her bravery and gallantry.

But he on whom this wonderful light which was discovered wrought the greatest and deepest impression was this our sorrowful Ricardo, as one who better than any other knew her, since that she was his cruel and beloved Leonisa, who so often and with so many tears had by him been reputed and deplored for dead. With the sudden and unexpected sight of the singular beauty of this Christian the heart of Ali was wounded and captivated, and in the same degree and with the selfsame wound Hazan found himself touched; the Cadi himself not being exempted from this amorous wound, who, more perplexed than both the other, knew not how to remove his eyes from looking on those fairer lights of Leonisa. And for to endear the great and powerful force of love, I would have thee to take notice that at one and the same instant there was bred in the hearts of all these three one and the same (as they flattered themselves) firm hope of obtaining and enjoying her; and therefore, without questioning how, where, and when the Jew came by her, they only asked him what he would take for her. The covetous Jew answered: "Two thousand crowns." But he had scarce set the price but that Ali Bashaw said unto him that he would give him so much for her, and that he would go to his tent and presently bring him his money.

But Hazan Bashaw, who was minded that he should not have her, though therein he should hazard his life, said: "I likewise will give for her those two thousand crowns which the Jew demandeth; yet would I neither give so much, neither set myself to cross Ali herein, or what he hath offered, did not that enforce me thereunto, which he himself shall confess is reason, and doth oblige and force me to do as I do, and this it is, that this Gentile slave appertaineth not to either of us two, but only to the Grand Signior, and therefore I say

that in his name I buy her. Now let us see who dare be so bold as to offer to take her from me!"

"Marry, that dare I," replied Ali, "because for the self-same end and purpose do I buy her; and it appertaineth more especially unto me to tender this present to the Grand Signior, in regard of the conveniency that I have to convey her forthwith to Constantinople, carrying her along with me, that thereby I may gain the good-will of the Grand Signior. For I being now a man, as thou now, Hazan, seest, without any charge or command, I had need seek out some means to procure it, wherein thou art surely settled for three years, since that this is the very first day in which thou beginnest to bear rule and to govern this rich kingdom of Cyprus; and therefore, as well for these reasons as that I was the first that offered the propounded price for her, it stands with all reason, O Hazan, that thou leave her unto me."

"Nay, rather it is more fitting, and will be better taken at my hands," replied Hazan, "to procure her and send her to the Grand Signior, since that I do it without being moved thereunto out of mine own private interest or expectancy of profit. And whereas you allege the commodiousness and conveniency of carrying her along with you, I will set forth a galley of mine own well armed, putting thereinto men of mine own, some servants, some slaves, which shall serve for her convoy and go along with her."

At these words Ali's blood began to rise, and rising upon his feet, he laid his hand on his cimeter, saying: "Hazan, my intentions being the same for the presenting and carrying of this Christian to the Grand Signior, and I having been the first chapman that drave the bargain, it is grounded upon all reason and justice that thou leave her unto me; and if thou shouldst but think to carry her from me, this cimeter which I lay my hand on shall defend my right and chastise thy presumption."

The Cadi, who was attentive to all that passed between them, and burned no less in love's flames than the other two, fearing lest he might go without the Christian, bethought himself how he might quench this great fire which was kindled between them, and withal to get the captive into his own custody without giving any the least suspicion of his damnable intention; and therefore, rising up, he interposed him-

self between them, and said: "Hazan and Ali, let me entreat you both to be quiet and lay aside these your differences, and I doubt not but I shall be able to compose them in such sort that both of you may effect your intentions, and the Grand Signior be, as you desire, well served by you."

To these words of the Cadi they presently showed themselves obedient, and had he commanded them a greater matter they would have done it (so great is the respect which those of that sect bare to his gray hairs).

The Cadi then prosecuting what he had begun in this manner: "Thou, Ali, sayest that thou wouldst have this Christian for the Grand Signior; and Hazan he says the like. Thou allegest that thou wast the first in offering the demanded price for her, and therefore she ought to be thine. Hazan contradicts thee in this; and though he doth not put his argument so home to the pinching-point, yet I find it is the same as thine is—that is, the same intention, which without all doubt was hatched as soon as thine was, in h desire and willingness to buy the slave for the same effect only thou gotst the start of him in having first declared thyself; yet ought not this to be a cause that he should absolutely and wholly be defrauded and frustrated of his good desire and therefore, in my opinion, it shall not be amiss to accorc this business between you in this form and manner following that both of you shall have equal interest in this slave, anc since that the use of her is to be at the will and pleasure of the Grand Signior, for whom she is bought, it belongeth unto him to dispose of her. In the meanwhile, you, Hazan shall pay two thousand[1] crowns, and Ali shall lay down the other two thousand, and the captive shall remain in my power, to the end that in both your names I may send her to Constantinople, that neither of you might remain unrewarded; and can certify, as being an eye-witness, your forwardness to gratify the Grand Signior, and therefore offer myself to send her thither at my cost and charge with that authority and decency which is due to him to whom she is sent, writing to the Grand Signior, acquainting him with all

[1] *Two thousand*—it ought to be one thousand. Mabbe is occasionally inaccurate in his rendering of numbers and sums of money.—[ED.]

that which passed here and your readiness to do him this service."

These two enamoured Turks neither knew, nor could, nor would contradict him, each of them forming and imagining in his mind a hope, though doubtful, of promising to themselves the attaining to the end of their inflamed desires. Hazan, who was to continue Viceroy of Cyprus, thought upon giving great gifts to the Cadi, that being thereby overcome and obliged, he should deliver up unto him the captive; and Ali he imagined to do some such act as should assure the obtaining of what he desired; and each of them holding his own design the best and the surest, they easily condescended to what the Cadi had propounded, and with a joint consent both of them delivered her up presently unto him, and made each of them present payment to the Jew one thousand crowns apiece. But the Jew said he would not part with her upon those terms, if they meant to have into the bargain her wearing apparel and her jewels, which he valued at one thousand crowns more. And in very deed they could be little less worth, because in her hairs, which partly hung dishevelled on her shoulders and partly knit up in curious knots on her forehead, there appeared some ropes of pearls which very gracefully were interwoven with them. The bracelets about her arms and above her ankles, in the small of the leg, were likewise full of great pearls; her raiment throughout was very rich, and thereon a mantle, after the Moorish manner, of green satin, deeply fringed and embroidered with gold.

In a word, it seemed to all that were there present that the Jew had undervalued the attiring of her; and the Cadi, that he might not show himself less liberal than the two Bashaws, told him he would pay him those thousand crowns, because he would have her to be presented in the same dress which she was now in to the Grand Signior. The two competitors did approve very well of it, each of them believing that all should fall out as they would have it.

I want now words significant enough to tell you what Ricardo thought in seeing his soul set out thus to open sale, and those thoughts which then came into his head, and those fears which suddenly surprised him, whereas he saw that his finding of his beloved pledge was to lose her the more. He knew not for a while whether he were sleeping or waking,

not believing his own eyes in giving credit to that which they had seen; for it seemed unto him a thing impossible that they should see so unexpectedly before them those eyes of hers which he had not long since given to be shut up in eternal darkness.

When he saw that this was no phantasma or dream, but a real truth, he came to his friendly Mahamut, and whispering him in the ear, said softly unto him: "Friend, dost not thou know her?"

"Not I," said Mahamut.

"Then would I have thee know," replied Ricardo, "that it is Leonisa."

"How," answered Mahamut, "what is that, Ricardo, thou sayest?"

"That," said Ricardo, "which thou hast already heard."

"Hold thy peace, then, and do not discover her," replied Mahamut; "for Fortune goes now so ordering the business that thou shalt find her good and prosperous, since that she is in my master's power."

"Dost thou think it fit," said Ricardo, "that I go and put myself in some such place where I may be seen by her?"

"No, by no means," replied Mahamut, "lest she should put you, or you her, into some sudden passion; and have a great care that you do not give any the least sign or token that you know her, or that ever you had seen her, for if you should do so it might redound much to the prejudice of my design, if not utterly overthrow it."

"I will follow your advice," answered Ricardo; and so went his way, leaving the place lest his eyes might encounter with those of Leonisa; who held hers all the while that this passed nailed to the ground, trilling some tears down from them.

She being thus, as you have heard, rendered up unto the Cadi, he came unto her, and laying hands on her, delivered her unto Mahamut, commanding him to carry her to the city, with charge to deliver her to his lady Halima, and to tell her withal that she should use and entreat her well, as being the slave of the Grand Signior. Mahamut did so, and left Ricardo all alone, who with his eyes went following this his star, till it was wholly taken out of his sight and covered as it were with a cloud from him by the walls of Nicosia. Having

lost her, he goes to look out the Jew, finds him, and coming civilly unto him, asked him where he had bought this captive Christian, and how and in what manner she came into his hand. The Jew made him answer that he lighted on her in the island of Pantanalea, and that he bought her of certain Turks whose galley had suffered wrack, being split there against the rocks; and being willing to have gone on in the prosecution of what he had begun, it received interruption and was wholly broken off by one that came from the Bashaws, telling the Jew that he must come away presently unto them, who had purposely sent for him that they might demand that of him which Ricardo was so desirous to know; and thereupon he abruptly took his leave.

In the way which was between the tents and the town Mahamut took occasion to ask Leonisa (speaking unto her in Italian) whence she was and of what place; who made him answer that she was of the city of Trapana.

Then Mahamut demanded again of her whether she did know in that city a rich and noble gentleman called Ricardo.

At her hearing him named Leonisa fetched a deep sigh, saying: "Too, too well, to my hurt."

"How to your hurt?" replied Mahamut.

"Because he knew me," said Leonisa, "to his own and my unhappiness."

"But I pray tell me," quoth Mahamut, "did you know likewise in the said city another gentleman, of a gentle disposition, the son of very rich parents, and himself in his own person very valiant, very liberal, and very discreet, called Cornelio?"

"I likewise know him," said Leonisa, "and, I may say, much more to my hurt than Ricardo. But I pray, sir, who are you, who know these two and ask me of them?"

"I am," said Mahamut, "of Palermo, and by various accidents in this disguise and different habit from that which I was wont to wear. I know them passing well, for it is not many days since that they were both in my power; for certain Moors of Tripoli in Barbary had taken Cornelio captive and sold him to a Turk, who brought him to this island, whither he came with merchandise (for he is a merchant of Rhodes), who had trusted Cornelio with all his goods."

"And he will keep them well," said Leonisa, "because

he knows so well to keep his own. But tell me, sir, how or with whom Ricardo came to this island?"

"Marry, he came," answered Mahamut, "with a pirate who took him prisoner in a garden near the seashore of Trapana, and [said] that together with him he had captivated a damosel, but I could never get him to tell me her name. He abode here some few days with his master, who was to go to visit Mahomet's Sepulchre, which is in the city of Almedina; but just at the time of his departure Ricardo fell so extreme sick that his master left him with me (for that I was his countryman), to the end that I might use all the best means for his recovery, and take care and charge of him till his return; and in case that he did not return hither, that I should send him unto him to Constantinople, whereof he would advertise me when he came thither. But Heaven had otherwise ordered it, since that unfortunate Ricardo, without having any accident or symptom of a dangerous sickness, within a few days ended those of his life, making often mention of one Leonisa, whom, as himself told me, he loved more than his own life, and was as dear unto him, if not dearer, than his own soul; which Leonisa, as he at large related unto me, suffered shipwreck at the island of Pantanalea, the galley wherein she was being split upon the rocks, and herself drowned; whose death he continually lamented, and with much weeping bewailed, till that his mourning had brought him to breathe his last, for I perceived no sickness at all in him in his body, but great shows of grief and sorrow in his soul."

"Tell me, sir," replied Leonisa, "this other young man whom you speak of, in those his discourses which he had with you, which (for that you were of his own country) could not but be very many, did he not at any time speak of Leonisa? And did he tell you how she and Ricardo were made captives, and the whole manner of it?"

"Speak of her?" said Mahamut. "Yes, a thousand and a thousand times, and asked me many a time and oft whether any Christian of this name had of late been brought to this island, and with such and such marks and tokens, and how glad he would be to hear any tidings of her, that he might ransom her. And withal I must tell you that he had told his master, and in telling made him believe, that she was not so

rich as he took her to be, and for that he had enjoyed her, he might now make the less reckoning of her, and that if three or four hundred crowns would purchase her freedom he would willingly give so much for her, because heretofore he had borne some good-will and affection towards her."

"Very little," said Leonisa, "must that his affection be which would not go beyond four hundred crowns. But Ricardo is more liberal, more valiant, more generous and ingenious than to make so poor an offer for that which he prized at so high a value. God pardon the party that was the cause of his death! for it was I that am that unhappy woman, whom he bewailed for dead; and God knows if I should not be glad with all my heart that he were alive, that I might requite his kindness, and that he might see how sensible I should be of his misfortune, who hath sorrowed so much for mine. I, sir, as I have already told you, am she who is as little beloved of Cornelio as I was greatly bewailed of Ricardo; she who by very many and various chances am come to this miserable estate wherein I now find myself; and though it be so dangerous, as you see, yet have I always, by Heaven's gracious assistance, kept mine honour entire and untouched, wherewith in this my misery I live contented. But now, woe is me! neither do I know where I am nor who is my master, nor whither my contrarious fates will hurry me; wherefore I beseech you, sir, by that blood which you have in you of a Christian, that you will give me your best counsel and advice in these my troubles, which for that they have been many, though they have made me look about and be somewhat the more wary and circumspect, yet notwithstanding such and so many every moment came upon me that I knew not well how to prevent and withstand them."

Whereunto Mahamut answered, that he would do all whatsoever he was able to do in serving, advising, and assisting her with his best wit and strength; and then did he advertise her of the difference between the two Bashaws for her sake, and how that she now remained in the power of the Cadi his master, for the conveying and presenting her to the Great Turk Selim, at Constantinople; but rather than this should take effect, he hoped in the true God, in whom he believed, though a bad Christian, that He would dispose otherwise of her; advising her withal, that by bearing herself fairly she

should work and insinuate herself into Halima's favour and good opinion, wife to the Cadi his master, in whose power she was to remain till they should send her to Constantinople acquainting her withal with Halima's conditions and qualities, and besides these told her many other things which might make much for her good, holding talk and discourse with her all the way till he had brought her to and left her in the Cadi's house and in the power of Halima, to whom he delivered his master's message.

The Moor, for that she saw she was so well clad and so beautiful, gave her a very kind and friendly welcome. Mahamut having rendered up his charge into Halima's hands, returned back to the tents to recount unto Ricardo what had passed betwixt himself and Leonisa, and meeting with him told him all, point by point, from the beginning to the ending. "But when I came to tell him how sorrowful Leonisa was when I signified unto her that he was dead, the water stood in his eyes. I told him how I had feigned that counterfeit story of Cornelio's being a captive, to see how she would take it; I acquainted him with her coldness to Cornelio, and the bad conceit she had of him for his undervaluing her." All which was as a sovereign cordial to Ricardo's afflicted heart; who said unto Mahamut: "There comes now into my mind, friend Mahamut, a tale which my father told me who you know how curious he was, and have heard, I am sure, what great honour the Emperor Charles the Fifth did him, whom he still served in honourable places in his wars. I tell you that he told me that when the Emperor was at the siege of Tuniz, and took it, together with the fort Goleta being one day in the field in his tent, they presented unto him a Moor, as a singular rarity for her beauty, and that at that very time wherein they presented her unto him entered in certain beams of the sun at the one side of the tent and rested on the hairs of the Moor, which seemed to stand in competition with those of the sun, being between red and yellow, resembling the colour of golden wires—a rare and strange thing amongst the Moors, with whom your black hair are in greatest esteem and request. He told me likewise that on that occasion there were in the tent, amongst many other two Spanish gentlemen, both very discreet, and both poets the one of Andaluzia, the other of Catalunia. The forme

having taken a view of her, vented certain verses which they call coplas, ending in rhyme; but being at a stand when he had uttered five of his verses, the other gentleman (seeing him stick, and that he could go no further to make an end of what he had begun for want of words, which on the sudden did not offer themselves to his liking), who stood close by him and had heard these his verses, went presently on where he left, adding instantly five other to the former; and this presented itself unto my memory when I saw that most beautiful Leonisa enter the Bashaws' tent, not only outshining the beams of the sun, should they have lighted on her, but even heaven itself with all its stars."

"Hold," said Mahamut; "no more, lest, friend Ricardo, thy tongue run riot; for at every word thou utterest I am afraid thou wilt pass so far beyond the bounds of not only reason but religion in the praise and commendation of thy fair Leonisa, that leaving to seem a Christian, thou wilt be taken for a Gentile. Let me hear those verses or coplas, or what else you please to call them, that we may afterwards talk of other things that may be more pleasing and perhaps more profitable."

"In good time," said Ricardo; "but let me once again advertise thee that the Andaluz vented the first five verses, and the Catalan the other five, both extempore, and these they be:

And. 'Whilst I behold thy glittering golden hairs,
Dishevelled thus, waving about thy ears,
And see those locks thus loosèd and undone,
For their more pomp to sport them in the sun,
Love takes those threads and weaves them with that art,'

Cat. 'He knits a thousand knots about my heart,
And with such skill and cunning he them sets,
My soul lies taken in those lovely nets,
Making me cry, fair prison that dost hold
My heart in fetters wrought of burnished gold.'"

"I like them well," said Mahamut, "but much better, my Ricardo, that you are in this good humour of repeating verses, because the saying or making of them requireth the minds of men that are dispassionated."

"Men likewise use," replied Ricardo, "to wail over hearse as to sing verses; both are verse. But laying this aside, te me what thou mindest to do in this our business; for though I understood not what the Bashaws treated in the tent till thou hadst carried away Leonisa, a renegado of my master, a Venetian, told me all, who was then present, and understood the Turkish language very well; and therefore above all things it is most needful and requisite to set our wits awork and seek out some plot to prevent Leonisa's coming to the hands of the Grand Signior."

"That which is fittest first of all to be done," answered Mahamut, "is that thou come to be in the power of my master. This being effected, we will afterwards consult on that which shall convene best for us."

Whilst they were thus talking came the guardian of the Christian captives belonging to Hazan and carried Ricardo away with him. The Cadi returned with Hazan to the city, who in a few days despatched Ali's residency, and gave it him rolled up and sealed, that he might carry it along with him to Constantinople. He taking his leave, prepared forthwith to set forward on his journey, being very instant with the Cadi that he would hasten the sending of the captive, and withal write his letters to the Grand Signior in his favour, for the better furthering of his pretensions. The Cadi promised him he would, but with treacherous bowels, which were almost turned into ashes, so were they set on fire by the inflamed love which he bare to the captive.

Ali being gone full of false hopes, and Hazan abiding behind not void of them, Mahamut so brought the business about that Ricardo came into the power of his master. Hours and days ran on, the time passed away, and the longing desire to see Leonisa did so press and wring Ricardo that he could not take one poor short minute of rest. Ricardo changed his own name into that of Mario, because his might not come to Leonisa's ears before that his eyes had seen her; and for to see her was very hard and difficult, for that the Moors are extremely jealous, and keep covered from all men the faces of their women; howbeit they do not much mislike the showing of them to Christians, which happily may be because being captives they do not reckon them for men, but slight them as contemptible creatures.

Yet one day it so happened that the lady Halima saw her slave Mario, and in seeing him took such a good liking of him that he remained deeply engraven in her heart and strongly fixed in her memory; and peradventure taking little contentment in the cold and weak embracements of her aged husband, she the more easily gave way to this her evil desire, and with the like easiness she acquainted Leonisa therewith, whom she now dearly loved, and made exceeding much of, for her sweet behaviour and discreet carriage, and likewise showed her great respect for that she was to be sent for a rarity to the Grand Signior. She acquainted her how that the Cadi had brought and received into his house a Christian captive of so gentle an aspect and comely presence that in her eye he was the handsomest man that ever she saw in her life, and that they said he was a chilibi, that is to say a gentleman, and countryman to Mahamut their renegado, and that she knew not how to give him clearly to understand the good-will and affection which she bare unto him, fearing lest that the Christian should slight and neglect her for declaring and manifesting her love unto him at the first sight, before she had further and better knowledge of him.

Leonisa asked her what was the captive's name. Halima told her Mario; to whom Leonisa replied: "If he be a gentleman, and of that place they say he is, certainly I should know him; but of this name Mario I do not remember that there is any such in Trapana. But if it shall stand with your ladyship's pleasure that I may but see him and talk a while with him, I shall be able to inform you both who he is and what may be hoped from him."

"It shall be so," said Halima; "and on Friday next, whenas the Cadi shall be at the Mezquita, performing those rites and ceremonies which are then and there required in their devotions and adorations, I will take occasion to call him in hither, where leaving you two together, you may talk alone by yourselves; and if you think fit, you may give him some inkling of my desires and well-wishings towards him, and that you will do me this friendly office in the best manner your wit and discretion can devise, of both which I have had already sufficient trial, and therefore need not to express myself or press you any further in this particular."

This Halima said to Leonisa, and within less than two

hours after, the Cadi called Mahamut and Mario unto him, and with no less efficacy than Halima had discovered her heart to Leonisa did this enamoured old-young man discover his to his two slaves, craving their counsel and advice what course he should take for to keep the Christian to himself and enjoy her, and yet comply with the Grand Signior, whose she was; telling them withal that he would rather die a thousand deaths than deliver her up once to the Great Turk.

With such affection did this Moor express his passion that they left a deep impression and belief in the hearts of his two slaves; whose thoughts were fully bent to run a contrary course to that which he imagined. He thought one thing and they another; in the end, it was concluded between them that Mario, as being a man of her own nation and country howbeit he had told him that he knew her not, should take in hand the soliciting her and in declaring his fervent affection; and in case that by his fair means he could not prevail and procure her good-will, he should then use force, she being now in his power; and this being done, to give out that she was dead, and so he should excuse his sending of her to Constantinople.

The Cadi rested wonderful well contented with this device of his slaves, and out of the great joy which he had imagined to himself he instantly gave Mahamut his liberty, bequeathing besides unto him after his death the one half of his goods. He likewise promised Mario, if he procured that which he so earnestly desired, not only his liberty, but good store of crowns, wherewith he should return home to his own country rich, honoured, and contented.

If he were liberal in promising, his captives were prodigal, offering to hale down the moon from heaven to do him service, how much more easily to draw Leonisa to the bent of his bow, and to condescend to his desire, so as Mario by his leave might have the conveniency offered him of speaking with her.

"I will give him free leave of access unto her," answered the Cadi, "even as often as he will himself, if that will advance the business; for I will so order it that Halima shall go hence to the house of her parents, who are Greek Christians, where she shall stay some few days, or longer time if need be; and she being abroad, I will command my porter that

he suffer Mario to enter into the house, and to have free ingress and egress as often as he pleaseth; and I will tell Leonisa that she may, if it please her, talk and converse with her countryman."

Thus did the wind begin to chop about of Ricardo's misfortunes, blowing with a gentle gale in his favour, his master not witting which way he meant to shape his course. This appointment being made and concluded on between these three, the first that laid this plot was Halima, showing herself a right woman, whose nature is facile, and whose wit quick and sudden for the effecting of that which she hath a mind unto, especially if her heart be eagerly set upon it. That very selfsame day the Cadi came to Halima and told her that she might when she would go out of the town to visit her father and mother, and make merry with them and the rest of her good friends, and to stay there as long as she listed, or till he sent for her; but because her heart was overjoyed with those good hopes which Leonisa had given her, she not only would not go to her parents' house, nor yet to that feigned paradise of Mahomet, and therefore told him that at this time she had no great mind to go thither; when she had, she would acquaint him therewith; but whensoever she went, she would carry the captive Christian along with her. "Oh, by no means," replied the Cadi, "for it is not fit that this pledge of the Grand Signior should be seen of any; besides, it would do her more hurt than good to converse with Christians, since that you know that when she comes into the power of the Grand Signior she must be shut up in the seraglio, and turn Turk whether she will or no."

"But if she go along with me," replied Halima, "it mattereth not much that she be in my parents' house, nor that she converse with them, with whom myself converse much more and yet I cease not for all that to be a good Turk. Besides, the longest time that I mean to spend with them in their house shall be at the farthest but four or five days, for the great love which I bear unto you will not give me leave to be any longer absent and not see you."

The Cadi made no reply, that he might not give her occasion to breed some suspicion or other in her of his intention.

Whilst this business was a-brewing, Friday came, and he went to the Mezquita, from whence he could not come forth

in almost four hours; and Halima had scarce seen him put l foot over the threshold of his house but she command Mario to be called for to come unto her; but a Christian Corsica would not suffer him to enter, who was then port and waited at the gate of the outward court, if Halima h self had not called out aloud unto him that he should let h come in. And so he entered, but much troubled, and tre bling, as if he had been to fight with a whole army of enemi

Leonisa was in the same dress and attire as when s entered the Bashaws' tent, sitting at the foot of a curic staircase of polished marble, which led the way up to a lar and spacious gallery rounding the whole house; her he hung downward towards her bosom, resting itself on t palm of her right hand, and leaning her elbow on her kn her eyes were turned another way quite contrary to the dc by which Mario entered, so that though he went towards t place where she sate yet did she not see him.

No sooner was Ricardo let in but he walked through t whole house with his eyes, yet could he not perceive anythi save a dumb and still silence, till that he cast his eye as where Leonisa sate; instantly whereupon so many thougl took hold on enamoured Ricardo as did work in him b amazement and gladness, conceiting himself to be a thousa paces and more distanced from his happiness and conte ment; he considered likewise with himself that he was captive, and his glory in another's power. Revolving th things with himself, he made towards her by a little and little, and with a fearful love, a joyful sadness, and timc ous courage (for such passions accompany true lovers), l came by degrees to the centre where his heart's joy w when by chance Leonisa turned her head aside, and fi her eyes on those of Mario, who looked very steadf on her.

But when both their looks had thus encountered ea other, by different effects [they] gave evident signs of th which their several souls felt within. Ricardo stood sto still, and could not stir one foot farther; and Leonisa, wl upon Mahamut's relation gave Ricardo for dead, and to s him now and that so unexpectedly alive, full of fear a amazement, without unfixing her eyes or turning her ba she stepped up backward four or five stairs, she b

herself as if she had seen some phantasma or a thing of another world.

Ricardo returned from out his astonishment, and knew by that which Leonisa did the true cause of her fear, and therefore said unto her: "It grieves me to the very soul, O of all fair the fairest, Leonisa! that the news did not fall out true which Mahamut gave thee of my death, for by it I might have excused those fears which now I have in thinking with myself whether that rigour which heretofore thou hast used towards me continue still in the same force and being. Quiet yourself, dearest in my love, and come down again; and if you dare do that which hitherto you never did, which is to draw near unto me, come and touch me, and thou shalt see that I am no phantastical body, no wandering ghost. I am Ricardo, Leonisa—that unfortunate Ricardo whom thou hast made so."

Whilst he was speaking this, Leonisa puts her finger upon her mouth, whereby Ricardo understood that it was a sign that he should be silent or speak more softly; and taking a little better heart unto him, he drew a little nearer unto her, in such a distance that he might hear these words come from her: "Speak lower, Mario (for so methinketh thou now callest thyself), and treat not of any other thing now save what I shall treat with thee, and consider withal that it may so happen that if we be overheard we shall never see one another any more. I verily believe that Halima our mistress listeneth to hear, if not heareth us; who, to deal plainly and briefly with thee, hath told me that she adores thee, and hath entreated me to be the intercessoress of this her desire. If thou wilt answer her wishes, it will be better for thy body than thy soul; but if thou wilt not, yet must thou feign that thou dost embrace her love, as well because I entreat thee so to do as also for that the declared desires of a woman ought not uncivilly to be despised and utterly rejected."

Hereunto Ricardo answered: "I did never think nor ever could imagine, fairest Leonisa, that there was that thing whatsoever which you should entreat me to do that should bring with it an impossibility of complying therewith, but that which you now require of me hath disdeceived me. Is peradventure man's will so light that it may be moved to and fro, and carried hither and thither whither the pleasure of

others shall guide and direct it? or doth it stand with the honour and faith of a gentleman, or with the repute of an honest man, to feign and dissemble in things of such weight and high a nature as this is? If it seem good unto you that any of these things in this kind ought to be or may be done, do that which shall be most pleasing in your own eyes, because you are the sole mistress of my will. But I now know that you likewise deceive me in this, since that you never rightly knew my will, and therefore know not how to dispose thereof; but because you may not say that in the first thing you commanded me you should not be obeyed, I will lose somewhat of myself, and of being what I ought to be; I will satisfy your desire, and that of Halima, as you say, feignedly, so that I may thereby gain the happiness to see you; and therefore do you feign my answers to your own good liking, for from henceforth my feigned will doth firm and confirm them. Now, in requital of this office which I do for you, which is in my opinion the greatest that ever I can or shall be able to do, though I should give my soul anew unto you, which I have so often given you, I beseech you that you will briefly tell me how you escaped from the hands of the pirates, and how you came to those of the Jew who so lately sold you."

"The story of my misfortunes," answered Leonisa, "requires more leisure than time will now permit to relate, yet notwithstanding I will not leave you wholly unsatisfied. Know, then, that the same very evening we parted, Ysuph's galley was with a stiff and strong wind driven to the same isle of Pantanalea where we likewise saw your vessel; but ours, we being not able to hinder it, ran remedilessly upon the rocks. My master then having his destruction before his eyes, and that there was little or no hope of safety left, with all possible haste emptied two hogsheads which were full of water, then stopped up the bungholes very close, and having bound the one to the other with good strong cords, he seated me between them; that done, he presently stripped himself, and taking another hogshead, spreading his arms over it, and binding a rope about his middle, causing the same to be fastened to the casks whereon I sate bound, with great courage he rushed into the sea, towing me after him. I had not the heart to rush in after him, which one of the

Turks seeing, pushed me forward with all his force, and sent me packing after Ysuph, where I lay without any sense, nor came again to myself till I found myself on land in the arms of two Turks, who bowing my head and body towards the ground, held me so a pretty space, all that while great store of salt water which I had swallowed down coming forth at my mouth. At last I opened mine eyes, but as one amazed, and looking about, who should I see but Ysuph lying by me, with his brains beaten out against the rocks when he had almost recovered the shore, where he ended his life. This I afterwards understood by the Turks; and they likewise told me that, taking hold of the cord, they drew me on land, without receiving any further harm than what I mentioned before unto you; of all the whole company only eight persons escaped drowning. Eight days we abode in the island, the Turks using me with as much respect as if I had been their sister, if not more. We kept ourselves close in a cave, the Turks fearing that if they should be espied, the Christians which had the command of the fort which is in the island would sally forth upon them and take them captive. They sustained themselves with wet biscuits which the sea had cast upon the shore from out the broken bins of the galley, which they went forth to gather up by night, that they might not be discovered. Fortune had so ordered it for my great ill that the fort was without a captain, who died but a few days before; and in all the fort there were not above twenty soldiers. This we came to know by a youth which was captivated by the Turks, who came down from thence to gather cockles by the seaside. At the eight days' end there arrived on that coast a vessel of the Moors, which they call Carmamucales; the Turks saw it coming in, and that they lay at anchor a little off the land, and so made towards them, making such signs to the vessel, which was not far off, that they who were in her knew they were Turks that called unto them. Thereupon they sent out their cock-boat, and they recounted unto them their distress, and they received them into their bark, wherein came an exceeding rich Jew, a merchant; and all the lading of the vessel, or the most part of it, was his, being fraughted with carpets and hides and other commodities which they bring from Barbary to the Levant. In the said vessel the Turks went for Tripoli, and in that voyage

they sold me to the Jew for two thousand ducats—an excessive price, if his love towards me had not made him so liberal, which the Jew afterwards discovered unto me. Leaving the Turks after all this in Tripoli, the vessel tacked about to perform her voyage, and the Jew in most impudent manner fell to soliciting of me; but I showed him such a countenance as his filthy desires deserved. Seeing himself then in despair of obtaining his lustful ends, he resolved to rid himself of me upon the first occasion that should offer itself unto him. And it coming to his knowledge that the two Bashaws, Ali and Hazan, were in this island, where he might sell and vent his merchandise as well as in Xio,[1] whither he was bound, he came hither with intention to sell me to one of the two Bashaws, and for this cause put me in this dress and wear wherein you now see me, for to affectionate them the more unto me who should buy me. I am given to understand that this Cadi hath bought me with purpose to carry me for a present to the Great Turk, whereof I am not a little afraid. Here I came to know thy feigned death; and I must now tell thee, if thou wilt believe me, and believe me thou mayst, that it grieved me to the very soul, and that I did more envy than pity thee, yet not out of any ill will that I bare unto thee, though I did not answer thy love according to thy expectation, for I shall never be ingrateful and disrespective where I have found so much love and respect, but because thou hadst then made an end of thy life's tragedy."

"Dear Leonisa," answered Ricardo, "you say not amiss herein, if death had not hindered the happiness of my coming again to see you, esteeming more this instant of glory which I enjoy in seeing you than any other happiness, saving that which is eternal, which either in life or in death might assure unto me my desire. The Cadi, now my master, into whose power I am come by no less various accidents than yours, bears the like fervent affection unto you as Halima doth to me; he hath made choice of me to be the interpreter of his thoughts. I entertained the motion, not for to do him any pleasure thereby, but that I might gain the commodity and conveniency of speaking with you, to the end that you may

[1] *Xio*—Chios.—[ED.]

see, Leonisa, to what hard terms our misfortunes have brought us—you to be the means of working an impossibility (for you know my mind touching the motion you made unto me), and me to be likewise set awork about such a business as I least dreamt of, and for which I would give, rather than obtain it, my life, which now I esteem according to its high worth and value since that it hath had the happiness to see you."

"I know not what to say unto thee, Ricardo," replied Leonisa, "nor how we shall be able to get out of this intricate labyrinth whereinto, as thou sayest, our hard fortune hath brought us; only I know to say thus much, that we must be driven in this business to use that which is contrary to our condition and hateful to honest minds, to wit, dissembling and deceit; and therefore say unto thee, that I will acquaint Halima with some such words delivered by thee that shall rather entertain her with hopes than drive her to despair. Thou likewise shalt say of me to the Cadi that which thou shalt think most convenient for the securing of mine honour and the deceiving of him; and since that I put mine honour into thy hands, thou mayst assure thyself that it is yet as true and entire as ever, though the many ways which I have gone and the many assaults which I have endured might call it into question, though you nor any else, without great injustice, can make the least doubt of it. For our speaking and conversing each with other will be, by their means, most facile and easy; always presupposed that you never once open your mouth nor treat aught with me which shall any way appertain to your declared pretension, for in what hour you shall do that, in the same you shall take your leave of seeing me any more. For I would not have thee think that my value is of so little worth, and of so few quilates,[1] that captivity shall work that with me which liberty could not do. I will be, by Heaven's favour, like gold, which the longer it is in the chrysol[2] comes forth thence the purer and the finer. Rest satisfied and content thyself with that which I have already said unto thee, lest the very sight of thee should, as it hath done heretofore, cause a distance in me, if not a loathing; for I would have thee to know, Ricardo,

[1] *Quilates*—carats.—[Ed.]

[2] *Chrysol*—crucible.—[Ed.]

that I always held thee to be too rough and arrogant, and to presume somewhat more of myself than was fitting. I confess likewise that I may be deceived; and it may be that, making this trial of thee, experience will set the truth before mine eyes, and tell me I was deceived, and being put out of this error I may be more kind but never less honest. Go, get you gone, for I fear me Halima may have overheard us, who hath some understanding of our Christian language—at least of that mingled speech which is used whereby we all understand one another."

"You say very well, mistress of my heart," answered Ricardo, "and I infinitely thank you, and take in exceeding good part this disdeceiving which you have given me, and make as high esteem thereof as of the favour you do me in suffering me to see you. And, as you say, experience peradventure will make known unto you how plain and downright my condition is, and how meek and humble my disposition, especially for to adore you; and had you not put a bound and limit to my carriage and treating with you, yet should it have been so fair and so honest towards you as you cannot wish or desire to have it better. Touching that which concerneth the entertaining of the Cadi, take you no care of that, leave it to me; do you the like with Halima. And, by the way, I would have you, lady, to know that since I have seen you there is bred in me such a strong hope and confidence as assureth me that it shall not be long before we procure our desired liberty, and so God have you in His keeping. At another time and better leisure I shall relate unto you the revolutions, the turnings and windings by which Fortune hath brought me to this estate, after that she had put us asunder and severed me from your sight."

With this they took their leaves each of other, Leonisa remaining well contented and satisfied with Ricardo's plain proceeding, and he the most joyful man in the world that he had heard one word from Leonisa's mouth without tartness.

Halima had shut up herself in her oratory, praying to her prophet Mahomet that Leonisa might bring her a good despatch of that business which she had recommended unto her. The Cadi he was in the Mezquita, recompensing with his desires those of his wife, they keeping him very solicitous, as wholly depending on the answer which he hoped to hear

from his slave to whose charge he had committed his talking with Leonisa; and that he might better come to have some speech with her, Mahamut should afford him opportunity though that Halima were in the house.

Leonisa increased in Halima her lewd lust and filthy desire by giving her very good hopes that Mario would condescend to her will and do whatsoever she would command him, but telling her withal that she must have patience till two moons were first passed over, before which time he could not comply with that which he much more desired than herself; and this term he entreated of her that he might make his prayers and supplications unto God for the freeing of him from his captivity and restoring him again to his former liberty. Halima contented herself with the excuse and relation of her beloved Ricardo, whom she would free from his slavery before the deputed time, so as he would accomplish her desire; and therefore entreated Leonisa that she would treat with him, and see if she could work him to dispense with the said time and to cut off all delays, and she would furnish him with as much money as the Cadi should require of him for his ransom.

Now, before that Ricardo returned an answer to his master, he consulted with Mahamut what answer he should make him; and they agreed between them to tell him that the case was desperate, no hope of winning her, and that as soon as possible he could he should carry her away to Constantinople, and that in the way thitherward, either by fair means or by force, obtain his desire; and as touching the inconvenience which might offer itself for his complying with the Grand Signior, he should do well to buy him another slave, and in the voyage to feign and cause it to be given out that Leonisa was fallen sick, and making our advantage of a dark night, we may cast the bought Christian overboard into the sea, saying that it was Leonisa the captive of the Grand Signior that was dead; and that may be done, and should be done, in such manner that the truth thereof should never be discovered, and so remain blameless with the Grand Signior and fulfil his own will, and that for the continuation of his pleasure they would afterwards devise some convenient course that should make all safe and sure.

This poor man, this old Cadi, his love to Leonisa made

him so blind that had they told him a thousand other greater unlikelihoods, so as they were directed to the fulfilling of his hopes, he would have believed them all; how much more when it seemed unto him that all which they said was good and current, and in a very fair way promising prosperous success. And so indeed it might have proved if the intention of these his two counsellors had not been to make themselves masters of the vessel, and to make an end of him and his foolish thoughts together.

But another difficulty offered itself to the Cadi, which in his own opinion was greater than all the rest, it running still in his head that his wife Halima would not let him go to Constantinople unless he would carry her with him. But presently they did facilitate that, telling him that instead of the Christian which they were to buy, and must die and be turned overboard, instead of Leonisa, Halima would serve excellently for that purpose, and none better, of whom he desired to be freed more than from death. With the same facility as he entertained this in his thought, with the like did Mahamut and Ricardo yield thereunto.

And being firmly resolved thereon, that very day the Cadi breaks with Halima about the voyage which he thought to make to Constantinople, to carry the Christian to the Grand Signior, by whose liberality he hoped he should be made the great Cadi of Cairo, or of Constantinople. Halima told him that she liked very well of his determination, thinking that he would leave Ricardo at home; but when the Cadi had certified her that he would carry him along with him, and likewise Mahamut, she began to change her opinion, and to disadvise him from that which before she had advised him to do; in fine, she concluded that if he did not take her with him, she would in no hand give way to his going. The Cadi would not cross her, but if she would needs have it so, her will should be his; thinking then with himself that he would quickly shake off that yoke which lay so heavy on his neck.

All this while Hazan Bashaw was not careless in soliciting the Cadi to deliver up the slave unto him, offering him mountains of gold, having besides given him Ricardo before for nothing, whose ransom he prized at two thousand crowns. All these gifts and promises wrought no further good with the Çadi than to make him hasten the more his departure;

and so, solicited by his desire and by the importunities of Hazan, together with those of Halima, who likewise built vain hopes in the air, within twenty days he had fitted and rigged up a brigantine of fifteen banks, manning it with voluntary soldiers, lusty young able men, partly Moors, partly Greek Christians. Therein he embarked all his wealth, and Halima left not aught at home in her house of any moment, and entreated her husband that he would give her leave to carry with her her father and mother, that they might see Constantinople. Halima's intention was the same with that of Mahamut, meaning to deal with him and Ricardo that when they were on their voyage they should make themselves masters of the brigantine and go away with it; but she would not open her mind nor declare herself unto them till she saw herself embarked, and this, too, with a full purpose and resolution to go to the Christian's country, and to return to that religion which she had first been of, and to be married to Ricardo; being verily persuaded that, carrying such store of wealth along with her, and turning Christian, he would not refuse to take her to wife.

In this interim Ricardo had speech with Leonisa, and declared unto her his whole intention; and she again acquainted him with Halima's purpose, who had imparted the same unto her. They enjoined each other secrecy, and recommending themselves to God, they stood expecting the day of their departure; which being come, Hazan went forth, accompanying them with all his soldiers to the seaside, and did not leave them till they had hoised sail, neither did he take off his eye from the brigantine till he had quite lost the sight of it; and it seemed that the air and breath of those sighs which the enamoured Moor vented forth did fill and drive forward with greater force the sails which wafted away his soul. But he, as one who a long time lived in such torment, oppressed by love that he could take no rest, thinking on that which he was to do, that he might not die by the hands of his violent desires, omitted not to put that presently in execution which with long deliberation and a resolute determination he had forecasted; and therefore in a vessel of seventeen banks which he had made ready in another port, he clapped into her fifty soldiers, all his friends and acquaintance, whom he had obliged unto him by many

gifts and promises, giving them in charge that they should put forth to sea, set upon and take the Cadi's brigantine and all the wealth that was in her, putting to the edge of the sword as many as went in her, save Leonisa the captive, for she was the only spoil that he looked after, prizing her above all the other riches and treasure which were in the vessel; he likewise gave order that they should sink her, so that not any one thing might remain that might give any the least sign or token of their perdition. The covetousness of the spoil added wings to their feet and courage to their hearts, howbeit they knew very well that they should find but little resistance in those of the brigantine, in regard that they were disarmed and without any the least suspicion that any such unexpected accident should befall them.

Two days had the brigantine now gone in her intended course, which to the Cadi seemed two ages; for the very first day of all he would fain have put in execution his determination, but his slaves advised him that the business must first be so carried that Leonisa should fall sick, to give thereby some colour to her death, and that this would require some days of sickness. He did not like of that, but would have given it out that she died suddenly, and so quickly make an end of what they had projected by despatching his wife out of hand, that he might allay the heat of that fire which by little and little went consuming his bowels; but in conclusion he must condescend to that which the other two thought fit.

Now, in this meanwhile Halima had declared her intent to Mahamut and Ricardo, and they were ready to put it in execution as soon as they had doubled the points of Alexandria or passed by the castles of Natolia. But the Cadi was so hasty with them and so sharp-set that they promised to perform the task they undertook upon the first occasion that should offer itself unto them. And one day, at the end of six which they had sailed [on their] voyage, and that now it seemed to the Cadi that the feigning of Leonisa's sickness was sufficient, he did importune his slaves that they should conclude the next day with Halima, and throw her, wrapped up in a winding-sheet, into the sea, saying it was the captive of the Grand Signior.

The day afterwards began to break wherein, according to the intention of Mahamut and Ricardo, was to be the accom-

plishment of their desires or the end of their days; when lo, they might descry a vessel which with sail and oar came chasing them. They were afraid that they were Christian pirates, from whom neither the one nor the other could expect any good; for being such, the Moors feared to be made captives, and the Christians that, though they should get their liberty, they should lose their goods and be stripped of all they had. But Mahamut and Ricardo contented themselves with Leonisa's and their own liberty; yet notwithstanding this imagined hope, they much feared the insolency of your rovers at sea, for they that follow such kind of exercises and make a common trade thereof, be they of what religion or nation soever, they usually are cruelly minded and of an insolent condition.

They prepared to defend themselves, without forsaking their oars, and doing all that might be done in such a case of necessity and so sudden. It was not long, a matter of two or three hours, little more or less, that they drew nearer and nearer, till they came within cannon-shot of them. Seeing this, they strook sail, loosed their oars, betook themselves to their arms, and expected their coming.

Howbeit, the Cadi bid them be of good cheer and fear nothing, for the vessel was Turkish, and would not do them any harm. He commanded that a white flag in token of peace should presently be set up, placing it on the yard-sail of the poop, because they might the better discern it, who being already blinded with covetousness and greediness of gain made up with great fury to board the ill-defended brigantine.

While this was in acting, Mahamut by chance turned his head aside, and perceived that from the westward there was a galley coming up, and to his thinking of some twenty banks, whereof he certified the Cadi; and some Christians which wrought at the oar said that the vessel they had descried was of Christians; all which did but double their confusion and fear, holding them in suspense, not knowing what to do, fearing and hoping such success as God should be pleased to give them.

By this time I conceive that the Cadi would have given (being in that strait that now he was), to have found himself again in Nicosia, all the hopes of his pleasure, so great was

the confusion and amazement wherein he was, though he were quickly put out of it by that first vessel, which without respect to the flag of peace, or that which was due to their religion, did set upon that of the Cadi with such force and fury that they wanted very little of sinking it. The Cadi presently knew those that had thus set upon them, for his eyes gave him assured notice that the soldiers were of Nicosia. He soon guessed the cause of their coming, and by whom set awork, and gave himself for a lost and dead man; and had it not been that the soldiers gave themselves more to the spoil than the slaughter, not a man of them had escaped alive.

But when they were most busy about their pillaging a Turk cried out aloud unto them, saying: "Arm, arm, fellow soldiers! for a vessel of Christians is coming upon us." And he had good reason to say so, because the vessel which the Cadi's brigantine descried bare Christian flags, and very fiercely did set upon that of Hazan; but before they came to grapple with her one from the prow demanded of them in the Turkish language what vessel that was, and whence? They made answer that it was Hazan's the Bashaw, Viceroy of Cyprus. "Why then," replied the Turk, "you being Musolimans, have set upon and robbed this vessel wherein we know goes the Cadi of Nicosia?" Whereunto they answered that they knew no other cause save that they were commanded to take her, and that they as being his soldiers, in obedience unto him, had done his command.

The captain of the second vessel who came in a Christian disguise resting satisfied with that which he desired to know, fell off from that of Hazan, and made towards that of the Cadi; and with the very first volley of shot he gave them he killed ten of those Turks that were in her, and presently after entered her with great courage and speed. But they ha scarce set their feet on the hatches but the Cadi instantly knew that it was not a Christian that had thus set upon him but Ali Bashaw, who was in love with Leonisa, who with th same intent as Hazan stood waiting his coming, and that h might not be known had clad his soldiers like Christians to the end that by this device his theft might not be discovered.

The Cadi, who knew the intentions of these lovers an

traitors, began in a loud voice to vent his malice, saying: "What is this thou doest, thou traitor Ali Bashaw, that thou being a Musoliman, that is to say a Turk, settest upon me as a Christian? And you traitors, Hazan's soldiers, what a devil hath moved you to commit so great an outrage, for that to fulfil the lascivious and lustful appetite of him who sent you hither will thus go against your natural lord?"

Upon these words of his all of them silenced their arms, no more clattering was heard, and looking one upon another, they came at last to know each other, because they had all of them been soldiers of one and the same captain, and served under one and the same banner; and being now abashed at the Cadi's word, and ashamed of their own bad act, the points of their cimeters were blunted and the edges of them dulled, their courages were quelled and their minds mightily dismayed. Only Ali shut his eyes and ears to all that he saw or heard, and falling upon the Cadi, he gave him such a cut in the head that if the blow had not been borne off by a hundred yards of calico wrapped about it, doubtless he had cleft his head asunder, yet it strook him down between the banks of the vessel; and being fallen, the Cadi said: "O cruel renegado, enemy of our Prophet! and is it possible that there is none that will chastise thy cruelty and this thy great insolency? How, accursed as thou art! durst thou presume to lay hands and draw thy sword against thy Cadi, and a minister of Mahomet?"

These words added force to force, and more fuel to the former fire; the which being heard by Hazan's soldiers, and moved with fear that Ali his soldiers would take their prey from them (which they held yet to be theirs), they determined to put all upon adventure; and one beginning first, and all the rest following after, they set upon the soldiers of Ali with such haste, rancour, and courage that in a little while they behaved themselves so manfully that though they were more by many than they, they reduced them to a very small number; but they which remained of them took heart unto them, leaving scarce four of Hazan's men alive, and those very sorely wounded.

Ricardo and Mahamut stood looking on, who ever and anon put their heads out of the scupper-holes of the poop cabin to see what would become of this great fray, which on

both sides was so hotly pursued; and seeing that the Turks were in a manner all slain, and they that were alive sore wounded, and how easily they might make an end of all of them, he called to Mahamut, and two kinsmen of Halima whom she had wrought to embark themselves with her, that they might assist in going away with the vessel, and with their help and her father's, taking up the cimeters of the slain, they showed themselves upon the deck, crying out: "Liberty! liberty!" and being aided by the voluntaries who were Greek Christians, with a great deal of ease and without receiving any one wound, they cut the throats of them all; and boarding Ali's galley, which they found without defence, they took it, with all that was therein. Of those that died in the second encounter one of the first was Ali Bashaw, whom a Turk in revenge of the Cadi ran through the body.

Being now masters of all the three vessels, they consulted what was now best to be done. In the end they yielded to Ricardo's advice, which was, that they should take out all things that were of any price or value, both in their own and Hazan's vessel, and stow them in Ali's galley, which was a vessel of far greater burden and fitter to take in the lading, and make good their voyage; and the rather, for that the rowers were Christians, who resting well contented with their recovered liberty, and with many other good things which Ricardo liberally shared among them, offered to carry him to Trapana, and if need were, even to the end of the world.

This being thus ordered, Mahamut and Ricardo, full of joy for this their good success, went to the Moor Halima and told her that if she would return to Cyprus they would man her own vessel with good valiant voluntaries, and give her the one half of the goods which she had embarked. But she, who notwithstanding this so great a calamity had not yet lost that itching love and amorous affection which she bare to Ricardo, told him that she would go with him to the land of Christians, whereof her parents were wondrous glad.

The Cadi was by this time come to himself, and having dressed and bound up his wound as their haste and the place would permit, they likewise told him that he should make choice of one of these two, either to go with them to the land of Christians, or to return in the same vessel he set

forth to Nicosia. Whereunto he answered, that since his ill fortune had brought him to such bad terms, he would rather accept of the liberty which they gave him, and that he would go to Constantinople and make his complaint to the Grand Signior of the great and grievous wrong which from Hazan and Ali he had received. But when he knew that Halima would leave him and turn Christian, he was almost ready to run mad.

In conclusion, they manned his own vessel, and furnished him with all things necessary for his voyage, and gave him some chequines[1] of these which once had been his own. And so, having taken his leave of all of them, being resolved to return to Nicosia, he besought before he had hoised sail that Leonisa would do him the favour to embrace him, for that grace and honour she therein should show him would of itself be sufficient to make him forget all his misfortune. All of them entreated Leonisa to confer that favour on one that loved her so well, since in so doing she should not go against the decorum and decency of her honesty. Leonisa yielded to their request; and the Cadi further entreated of her that she would but lay her hands upon his head, for that he hoped that imposition would heal his wound. Leonisa, to give him content, condescended thereunto. This done, and having bored many holes in Hazan's vessel, a fresh east wind favouring them, which seemed to court the sails and woo them that they might be admitted to come into them, did set them going amain, so that in a very few hours they lost the sight of the Cadi's brigantine; who with tears in his eyes stood looking how the winds carried away his wealth, his wife, and with Leonisa his soul's delight.

With different thoughts from the Cadi's sailed Ricardo and Mahamut; and so, not being willing to touch anywhere, as they went along on land, they passed by the town of Alexandria, launching through the deep Gulf, and without striking sail, or being driven to make use of their oars, they came to the strong island of Corfu, where they took in fresh water; and presently, without any further stay, they passed by those noted high cliffs the Acroserauros. And the second day they discovered afar off Paquino, the promontory of the

[1] *Chequines*—sequins.—[Ed.]

most fertile Trinacria, out of whose sight and that famous island of Malta they went flying, for with no less swiftness did this happy bottom bear them.

In fine, compassing that island, some four days after they descried Lampadosia, and anon after the island where they had like to have been wrecked, and the galley wherein Leonisa was, split against the rocks, the very sight whereof made her to tremble, calling to mind the danger wherein she had so lately seen herself. The day following they might ken before them their desired and beloved country, which quickened that joy which was already in their hearts; their spirits were transported with this new contentment, which is one of the greatest which can be had in this life, to arrive after a long captivity safe in their own native country; and the next that may be equalled with it is that which men receive in getting the victory over their enemies.

They found in the galley a great chest full of flags and streamers of silk of sundry colours, with which Ricardo caused the galley to be adorned in most gallant manner. The day was but newly broken whenas they found themselves to be within less than a league of the city, and rowing lustily, and sending forth ever and anon shoutings of joy and gladness, they slacked their oars the nearer they came to the haven, making in very leisurely. In her entering into the port an infinite number of people in an instant appeared; who having seen how slowly that well-trimmed vessel made to land, there was not any one in all the whole city which did not come forth hastening to the seaside.

While they were thus flocking to the shore, Ricardo entreated Leonisa that she would clothe and adorn herself in the same manner as when she entered into the tent of the Bashaws, because he would put a pretty jest upon her parents. She did so; and adding gallantry to gallantry, pearls to pearls, and beauty to beauty (which the heart's contentment commonly increaseth), she attired and dressed herself in such sort as caused a new admiration and wonder. Ricardo also put himself into the Turkish habit, the like did Mahamut and all those Christians that plied the oar, for there were raiments enough of the slain Turks to serve all of them. When they arrived at the port it was about eight of the clock in the morning, which showed itself so fair and so clear that it

seemed to appear so of purpose for to behold that joyful entrance.

Before their entering the port Ricardo made them to discharge their pieces of ordnance belonging to the galley, to wit, one cannon and two falcons. The city answered them with the like. The people stood as thick as they could stand together, expecting the coming in of this goodly vessel, so bravely waving her flying flags and streamers, moving to and fro with a gentle gale of wind. But when they were come so near them as to discern that they were Turkish, by reason of those white turbans that they wore on their heads, they began to wax fearful and jealous of some fraud and deceit; whereupon they betook them to their arms, and as many as were trained soldiers in the city hastened to the port, whilst the horsemen went some one way, some another, scouring the coast. Of all which stir they took great pleasure, who by little and little drew nearer and nearer till they entered the haven, and casting anchor near the shore, throwing out a plank, and pulling in their oars one by one, as it were in procession came on land, which with tears of joy they kissed again and again—an evident sign that they were Christians who had made prize of that vessel. The last that landed were the father and mother of Halima and her kinsmen, all, as we told you, clad after the Turkish fashion. That which made up the total sum or final end of all was fair Leonisa, having a veil cast over her face of crimson taffeta, led by Ricardo and Mahamut; which spectacle drew after them the eyes of all that infinite multitude, who at their landing prostrated themselves as the rest did, saluting the earth with their kisses.

By that time this was done, the Captain and Governor of the city was come up unto them, who knew very well that they of all the rest were the chief and principal persons; but he had scarce come fully near them but presently he knew Ricardo, and ran with open arms and signs of exceeding great joy to embrace him.

There came along with the Governor Cornelio and his parents, and those of Leonisa, with all her kinsfolk, together with those of Ricardo, all which were the greatest persons of rank and quality in the whole city. Ricardo embraced the Governor, and repaid them all with thanks that gave him the

who have been my companions in misery; and though hard misfortunes and sad mischances are wont to alter our dispositions and to depress valiant minds, yet was it not so with the overthrower of my good hopes; for I may be bold to say it, that she amid these her miseries hath with the more undaunted courage and constant resolution endured the shipwreck of her disadventures and the encounters of my earnest but honest importunings; wherein that old adage is verified: 'They may change their countries but not their customs who have once gotten a habit of them.' Of all this which I have said I thence infer that I offered my whole estate for her ransom, gave her my soul in my good desires, plotted the means of her liberty, and adventured more for her than myself, my life; and though from all these, in the construction of noble and ingenious dispositions, may be raised engagements of some moment, yet will I not press any one upon her, save only this one which I presume she will make good"; and in saying this, he put up his hand, and in a very civil and mannerly way took away the scarf from before Leonisa's face, which resembled as it were the removing of a cloud which darkens the beautiful brightness of the sun. Then did he prosecute his speech, saying: "Lo, here, Cornelio, I deliver unto thee such a jewel, which thou oughtest to esteem above all those things that are esteemed worthy. And so here, thou fair Leonisa, I give thee that which thou hast ever had in thy memory. This if you please you may term liberality; in comparison whereof, to give away my estate, my life, my honour, is all as nothing. Take her, O thou fortunate young man! take her, I say; and if thy knowledge can but come to reach so high as to come to know her worth, I shall hold thee to be the happiest man this day on earth. Together with her I will give thee likewise as much as comes to my share of all that which Heaven hath allotted to us all, which I make account will come to above thirty thousand crowns. All this mayst thou freely enjoy with much pleasure, quietude, and content; and Heaven grant that it may continue many long and happy years. As for myself, being made unfortunate by some squint-eyed star at my birth, since that I must be without Leonisa, I am content to be poor; for he lives too long who lives without Leonisa."

This said, he was silent, as if he had knit a knot upon

his tongue. But within a very little while, before that any other spake, recollecting himself, he said: "O Heavens! how do pinching troubles disturb the understanding! I, gentlemen, out of the desire which I have to do good, have not weighed well what I said; for it is not possible that a man should show himself liberal of that which is another's, not his own. What jurisdiction or power have I in Leonisa for to give her unto another? or how can I make offer of that which is so far from being mine? Leonisa is his, and so much his that, were her parents dead (but long may they live) her affection would find no opposition. And if there may stand perhaps in her way those obligations which, being as she is, discreet, she ought to think she owes me, from this day forward I disclaim them, cancel them, and acknowledge them to be wholly void and of none effect, and therefore unsay what I said before. I give then to Cornelio nothing, because I cannot; only I confirm the grant of my goods made to Leonisa, without desiring or looking for any other recompense save that she esteem for true my honest thoughts, and that she will have this belief of them, that they were never directed nor looked towards any other point save that which stood with her incomparable honesty, her great worth, and infinite beauty." And here Ricardo ended his speech.

Whereunto Leonisa answered in this manner: "If any favours, O Ricardo, you imagine I did Cornelio, whenas you were enamoured and jealous of me, imagine likewise that it was both meet and honest, as being guided by the will and order of my parents, who, intending to make a match between us, laid their command upon me to do him those favours. If you rest satisfied with this, well may you satisfy yourself with that which experience hath made known unto you of my honesty and reservedness. I speak this for to give you, Ricardo, to understand that my will was always subject to another's will, to wit, my parents', whom I now most humbly, as is meet, beseech and earnestly entreat that they will give me leave and liberty freely to dispose of that which you valour and liberality hath bestowed on me."

Her parents with a very good will gave her their leave so to do, relying on her discretion that she would make use thereof in such sort as should redound always to her ow honour and their profit.

Having obtained this license, discreet Leonisa proceeded thus: "I shall entreat you, as many as be here present, that you will bear me witness that I had rather incur the censure of lightness and inconstancy, which none of you all can or shall ever be able to charge me therewith, than to be taxed (which is hateful both in the sight of God and man) of unthankfulness and ingratitude. And therefore, O valiant Ricardo, my good-will and affection, hitherto so reserved, so perplexed and doubtful, shall now declare itself in your favour, to the end that you men may know that all women are not ingrateful, by my expressing of my thankfulness to you. I am thine, Ricardo, and will be thine till death, if some better knowledge move thee not to deny me thy hand; for I desire nothing more than to have thee to be my husband."

Ricardo hearing these words was so transported with joy and in a manner so beside himself, that he neither knew how, nor could not answer Leonisa in any other language than humbling himself on his knees before her and kissing her hands, which he held fast by force, bathing them often with his tender and loving tears. Cornelio did shed tears too, but of grief and sorrow; so did Leonisa's parents, but of joy and gladness; and of admiration and contentment all the standers-by.

The Bishop of that city was then there present, and with his benediction and license brought them to the cathedral church, and, dispensing with the time, instantly married them. The joyful news of this wedding was quickly spread over all Trapana; and that very night, in token of rejoicing, infinite lights were set up and great bonfires made, accompanied with ringing of bells and divers loud musical instruments; and for many days after there were masquings, comedies, sporting with canes,[1] running of bulls, and solemn invitations and feastings made by the parents of Ricardo and Leonisa. Mahamut and Halima were reconciled to the Church, who impossibilited of fulfilling her desire in being Ricardo's wife, contented herself in matching with Mahamut. To Halima's parents and kinsmen Ricardo gave liberally of those spoils which he had taken, wherewith they might be enabled to live not only sufficiently but plentifully. In conclusion, all of them

[1] *Sporting with canes*—mock tournaments.—[ED.]

remained fully contented and satisfied; and the fame of Ricardo going beyond the bounds of Sicily, spread itself through all the parts of Italy and many other places under the name of The Liberal Lover; and even to this very day continueth fresh in those many children which he had by Leonisa, who was a rare example of discretion, honesty, reservedness, thankfulness, and beauty.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

VII

1700 TO 1750:

Contes de Fées, Charles Perrault (1700–11).
* Fables, John Dryden (1700).
The Apparition of Mrs. Veal, Daniel Defoe (1706).
Tales (in The Tatler), Addison and Steele (1709–11).
Tales (in The Spectator), Addison and Steele (1711–12–1714).
The Destruction of the Isle of St. Vincent, Daniel Defoe (1718).
The Dumb Philosopher, Daniel Defoe (1719).
The King of Pirates, Daniel Defoe (1719).
Stories in A System of Magic, Daniel Defoe (1726).
Ghost Stories, Daniel Defoe, An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions (1727).
Histoire de Fleur d'Epine; Anthony, Count of Hamilton (1730).
Le Sopha, C. P. J. de Crébillon (1745).
Zadig, Voltaire (1747?).
Les Bijoux Indiscrets, Denis Diderot (1748).
Le Monde Comme il Va, Voltaire (1748).

THE APPARITION OF MRS. VEAL

THE APPARITION OF MRS. VEAL

THE short stories written in the eighteenth century may roughly be divided into three classes: those of the general realistic type, such as those of Defoe, which attempt to make fiction appear to be fact, of which the present story is an example; those with a purpose, as a sort of tract, of which Voltaire's tales are perhaps the supreme instance; and finally, wonder-tales or fairy-stories, in which class the tales of the Frenchman, Charles Perrault, are the great example in the latter part of the seventeenth and in the early part of the eighteenth century. As Ferdinand Brunetière says, "from 1680 to 1715 no kind of literature was produced in more abundance than fairy-stories."

The Apparition of Mrs. Veal, almost the earliest of Daniel Defoe's (1661?–1731) realistic fictions, was first published in a pamphlet in July, 1706. It was not, as has often been asserted, written to aid the sale of a book, though it was afterwards used for that purpose; as it appears, with rather ill success. "No one can read this marvellous creation of our author's," says William Lee in his Life of Defoe, "and study the whole of its details, without concurring in the eulogistic criticism of Sir Walter Scott, and other writers who have considered it. The Apparition of Mrs. Veal could never have happened in reality; and yet, it is perhaps the most perfect thing of its kind that ever was written." The skill of Defoe in disarming criticism by giving all the arguments both for and against the veracity of the characters has been aptly commented on by Leslie Stephen. Thomas Wright, in his Life of Defoe, suggests whether "a lady of Defoe's acquaintance, to whom he gives the name of Mrs. Bar-

grave, did not tell him, and in good faith, this story." Admitting that, the responsibility for the origin of the fiction is only laid elsewhere. For a thorough threshing of this and other disputed questions, the reader is referred to the introductions of the edition of Defoe's writings edited by George A. Aitken.

The present text is a faithful copy of the first edition, though the punctuation has been somewhat modernised; many of the modern reprints are very inaccurate.

AUTHORITIES:

Hours in A Library (first series), by Leslie Stephen.

Daniel Defoe: His Life and Recently Discovered Writings, by William Lee.

Daniel Defoe, by William Minto (English Men of Letters series).

The Short Story in English, by Henry Seidel Canby (Chapter IX).

A TRUE RELATION

OF THE

APPARITION OF ONE MRS. VEAL

THE NEXT DAY AFTER HER DEATH

TO ONE

MRS. BARGRAVE

AT

CANTERBURY, THE 8TH OF SEPTEMBER 1705

THE PREFACE

THIS relation is matter of fact, and attended with such circumstances as may induce any reasonable man to believe it. It was sent by a gentleman, a justice of peace at Maidstone, in Kent, and a very intelligent person, to his friend in London, as it is here worded; which discourse is attested by a very sober and understanding gentlewoman and kinswoman of the said gentleman's, who lives in Canterbury, within a few doors of the house in which the within-named Mrs. Bargrave lives; who believes his kinswoman to be of so discerning a spirit as not to be put upon by any fallacy, and who positively assured him that the whole matter as it is here related and laid down is what is really true, and what she herself had in the same words, as near as may be, from Mrs. Bargrave's own mouth, who, she knows, had no reason to invent and publish such a story, nor any design to forge and tell a lie, being a woman of much honesty and virtue, and her whole life a course, as it were, of piety. The use which we ought to make of it is to consider that there is a life to come after this and a just God who will retribute to every one according to the deeds done in the body, and therefore to reflect upon our past course of life we have led in the world; that our time is short and uncertain; and that if we would escape the punishment of the ungodly and receive the reward of the righteous, which is the laying hold of eternal life, we ought, for the time to come, to return to God by a speedy repentance, ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, to seek after God early, if haply He may be found of us, and lead such lives for the future as may be well pleasing in His sight.

A RELATION OF THE APPARITION OF MRS. VEAL

This thing is so rare in all its circumstances, and on so good authority, that my reading and conversation has not given me anything like it. It is fit to gratify the most ingenious and serious inquirer. Mrs. Bargrave is the person to whom Mrs. Veal appeared after her death; she is my intimate friend, and I can avouch for her reputation for these last fifteen or sixteen years, on my own knowledge; and I can confirm the good character she had from her youth to the time of my acquaintance; though since this relation she is calumniated by some people that are friends to the brother of Mrs. Veal who appeared, who think the relation of this appearance to be a reflection, and endeavour what they can to blast Mrs. Bargrave's reputation and to laugh the story out of countenance. But by the circumstances thereof, and the cheerful disposition of Mrs. Bargrave, notwithstanding the unheard-of ill-usage of a very wicked husband, there is not the least sign of dejection in her face; nor did I ever hear her let fall a desponding or murmuring expression; nay, not when actually under her husband's barbarity, which I have been witness to, and several other persons of undoubted reputation.

Now you must know Mrs. Veal was a maiden gentlewoman of about thirty years of age, and for some years last past had been troubled with fits, which were perceived coming on her by her going off from her discourse very abruptly to some impertinence. She was maintained by an only brother, and kept his house in Dover. She was a very pious woman, and her brother a very sober man, to all appearance; but now he does all he can to null or quash the story. Mrs. Veal was intimately acquainted with Mrs. Bargrave from her childhood. Mrs. Veal's circumstances were then mean;

her father did not take care of his children as he ought, s that they were exposed to hardships; and Mrs. Bargrave i those days had as unkind a father, though she wanted neithe for food nor clothing, while Mrs. Veal wanted for both; s that it was in the power of Mrs. Bargrave to be very muc her friend in several instances, which mightily endeared Mr Veal; insomuch that she would often say: "Mrs. Bargrav you are not only the best, but the only friend I have in tl world; and no circumstance in life shall ever dissolve n friendship." They would often condole each other's adver fortune, and read together Drelincourt upon Death, and oth good books; and so, like two Christian friends, they comforte each other under their sorrow.

Some time after, Mr. Veal's friends got him a place the Custom House at Dover, which occasioned Mrs. Ve by little and little, to fall off from her intimacy with Mr Bargrave, though there was never any such thing as a qua rel; but an indifferency came on by degrees, till at last Mr Bargrave had not seen her in two years and a half; thoug above a twelvemonth of the time Mrs. Bargrave had bee absent from Dover, and this last half-year had been in Ca terbury about two months of the time, dwelling in a hou of her own.

In this house, on the 8th of September last, viz., 17c she was sitting alone, in the forenoon, thinking over her u fortunate life, and arguing herself into a due resignation Providence, though her condition seemed hard. "And said she, "I have been provided for hitherto, and doubt n but I shall be still; and am well satisfied that my afflictio shall end when it is most fit for me"; and then took up h sewing-work, which she had no sooner done but she hears knocking at the door. She went to see who it was there, a this proved to be Mrs. Veal, her old friend, who was in riding-habit: at that moment of time the clock struck twel at noon.

"Madam," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I am surprised to se you, you have been so long a stranger"; but told her she wa glad to see her, and offered to salute her, which Mrs. Ve complied with, till their lips almost touched; and then Mr Veal drew her hand across her own eyes and said: "I a not very well", and so waived it. She told Mrs. Bargra

she was going a journey, and had a great mind to see her first. "But," says Mrs. Bargrave, "how came you to take a journey alone? I am amazed at it, because I know you have so fond a brother." "Oh," says Mrs. Veal, "I gave my brother the slip, and came away, because I had so great a desire to see you before I took my journey." So Mrs. Bargrave went in with her into another room within the first, and Mrs. Veal set her down in an elbow-chair, in which Mrs. Bargrave was sitting when she heard Mrs. Veal knock. Then says Mrs. Veal: "My dear friend, I am come to renew our old friendship again, and beg your pardon for my breach of it; and if you can forgive me, you are one of the best of women." "Oh," says Mrs. Bargrave, "don't mention such a thing; I have not had an uneasy thought about it; I can easily forgive it." "What did you think of me?" said Mrs. Veal. Says Mrs. Bargrave: "I thought you were like the rest of the world, and that prosperity had made you forget yourself and me." Then Mrs. Veal reminded Mrs. Bargrave of the many friendly offices she did her in former days, and much of the conversation they had with each other in the time of their adversity; what books they read, and what comfort in particular they received from Drelincourt's Book of Death, which was the best, she said, on that subject ever wrote. She also mentioned Dr. Sherlock, and two Dutch books which were translated, wrote upon death, and several others; but Drelincourt, she said, had the clearest notions of death and of the future state of any who had handled that subject. Then she asked Mrs. Bargrave whether she had Drelincourt. She said: "Yes." Says Mrs. Veal: "Fetch it." And so Mrs. Bargrave goes upstairs and brings it down. Says Mrs. Veal: "Dear Mrs. Bargrave, if the eyes of our faith were as open as the eyes of our body, we should see numbers of angels about us for our guard. The notions we have of heaven now are nothing like what it is, as Drelincourt says. Therefore be comforted under your afflictions, and believe that the Almighty has a particular regard to you, and that your afflictions are marks of God's favour; and when they have done the business they are sent for, they shall be removed from you. And believe me, my dear friend, believe what I say to you, one minute of future happiness will infinitely reward you for all your sufferings; for I can never believe [and

claps her hand upon her knee with great earnestness, whi indeed ran through most of her discourse] that ever Goc will suffer you to spend all your days in this afflicted state but be assured that your afflictions shall leave you, or yot them in a short time." She spake in that pathetical anc heavenly manner, that Mrs. Bargrave wept several times, sh was so deeply affected with it.

Then Mrs. Veal mentioned Dr. Horneck's Ascetick, a the end of which he gives an account of the lives of th primitive Christians. Their pattern she recommended to ou imitation, and said their conversation was not like this of ou age; "for now," says she, "there is nothing but frothy, vai discourse, which is far different from theirs. Theirs was t edification, and to build one another up in faith; so that the were not as we are, nor are we as they were; but," said she "we might do as they did. There was a hearty friendshi among them; but where is it now to be found?" Says Mrs Bargrave: "'Tis hard indeed to find a true friend in thes days." Says Mrs. Veal: "Mr. Norris has a fine copy o verses, called Friendship in Perfection, which I wonderfull admire. Have you seen the book?" says Mrs. Veal. "No, says Mrs. Bargrave, "but I have the verses of my own wri ting out." "Have you?" says Mrs. Veal; "then fetcl them." Which she did from above-stairs, and offered then to Mrs. Veal to read, who refused, and waived the thing saying, holding down her head would make it ache; and ther desired Mrs. Bargrave to read them to her, which she did As they were admiring Friendship Mrs. Veal said: "Dea Mrs. Bargrave, I shall love you forever." In the verses ther is twice used the word Elysian. "Ah!" says Mrs. Veal "these poets have such names for heaven!" She woul often draw her hand across her own eyes and say: "Mrs Bargrave, don't you think I am mightily impaired by my fits?" "No," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I think you look as wel as ever I knew you."

After all this discourse, which the apparition put ir words much finer than Mrs. Bargrave said she could pretenc to, and was much more than she can remember (for it canno be thought that an hour and three-quarters' conversatior could all be retained, though the main of it she think she does), she said to Mrs. Bargrave she would have he

write a letter to her brother, and tell him she would have him give rings to such and such, and that there was a purse of gold in her cabinet, and that she would have two broad pieces given to her cousin Watson.

Talking at this rate, Mrs. Bargrave thought that a fit was coming upon her, and so placed herself in a chair just before her knees, to keep her from falling to the ground, if her fit should occasion it (for the elbow-chair, she thought, would keep her from falling on either side); and to divert Mrs. Veal, as she thought, she took hold of her gown-sleeve several times and commended it. Mrs. Veal told her it was a scoured silk, and newly made up. But for all this, Mrs. Veal persisted in her request, and told Mrs. Bargrave she must not deny her; and she would have her tell her brother all their conversation when she had an opportunity. "Dear Mrs. Veal," said Mrs. Bargrave, "this seems so impertinent that I cannot tell how to comply with it; and what a mortifying story will our conversation be to a young gentleman!" "Well," says Mrs. Veal, "I must not be denied." "Why," says Mrs. Bargrave, "'tis much better, methinks, to do it yourself." "No," says Mrs. Veal, "though it seems impertinent to you now, you will see more reason for it hereafter." Mrs. Bargrave then, to satisfy her importunity, was going to fetch a pen and ink; but Mrs. Veal said: "Let it alone now, and do it when I am gone; but you must be sure to do it"; which was one of the last things she enjoined her at parting; and so she promised her.

Then Mrs. Veal asked for Mrs. Bargrave's daughter. She said she was not at home: "but if you have a mind to see her," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I'll send for her." "Do," says Mrs. Veal. On which she left her, and went to a neighbour's to send for her; and by the time Mrs. Bargrave was returning, Mrs. Veal was got without the door in the street, in the face of the beast-market, on a Saturday (which is market-day), and stood ready to part as soon as Mrs. Bargrave came to her. She asked her why she was in such haste. She said she must be going, though perhaps she might not go her journey until Monday; and told Mrs. Bargrave she hoped she should see her again at her cousin Watson's before she went whither she was a-going. Then she said she would take her leave of her, and walked from Mrs. Bargrave in her

view, till a turning interrupted the sight of her, which wa three-quarters after one in the afternoon.

Mrs. Veal died the 7th of September, at twelve o'clock : ncon, of her fits, and had not above four hours' senses befoi death, in which time she received the sacrament. The ne: day after Mrs. Veal's appearance, being Sunday, Mrs. Ba grave was mightily indisposed with a cold and a sore throa that she could not go out that day; but on Monday mornir she sends a person to Captain Watson's to know if Mr Veal were there. They wondered at Mrs. Bargrave's i: quiry, and sent her word that she was not there, nor w: expected. At this answer, Mrs. Bargrave told the maid sl had certainly mistook the name, or made some blunder. Ai though she was ill, she put on her hood, and went herself Captain Watson's, though she knew none of the family, see if Mrs. Veal was there or not. They said they wonder at her asking, for that she had not been in town; they we sure, if she had, she would have been there. Says Mr Bargrave: "I am sure she was with me on Saturday almo two hours." They said it was impossible; for they must ha seen her, if she had. In comes Captain Watson while tl are in dispute, and said that Mrs. Veal was certainly dea and her escutcheons were making. This strangely surpris Mrs. Bargrave, who went to the person immediately wl had the care of them, and found it true. Then she related t whole story to Captain Watson's family, and what gown s had on, and how striped, and that Mrs. Veal told her it w scoured. Then Mrs. Watson cried out: "You have seen h indeed, for none knew but Mrs. Veal and myself that t gown was scoured." And Mrs. Watson owned that she d scribed the gown exactly; "for," said she, "I helped her make it up." This Mrs. Watson blazed all about the tow and avouched the demonstration of the truth of Mrs. Ba grave's seeing Mrs. Veal's apparition; and Captain Wats carried two gentlemen immediately to Mrs. Bargrave's hou to hear the relation from her own mouth. And then it spre so fast that gentlemen and persons of quality, the judicio and sceptical part of the world, flocked in upon her, whic at last became such a task that she was forced to go out the way; for they were in general extremely satisfied of th truth of the thing, and plainly saw that Mrs. Bargrave wa

no hypochondriac, for she always appears with such a cheerful air and pleasing mien, that she has gained the favour and esteem of all the gentry, and 'tis thought a great favour if they can but get the relation from her own mouth. I should have told you before that Mrs. Veal told Mrs. Bargrave that her sister and brother-in-law were just come down from London to see her. Says Mrs. Bargrave: "How came you to order matters so strangely?" "It could not be helped," says Mrs. Veal. And her sister and brother did come to see her, and entered the town of Dover just as Mrs. Veal was expiring. Mrs. Bargrave asked her whether she would drink some tea. Says Mrs. Veal: "I do not care if I do; but I'll warrant this mad fellow [meaning Mrs. Bargrave's husband] has broke all your trinkets." "But," says Mrs. Bargrave, "I'll get something to drink in for all that." But Mrs. Veal waived it, and said: "It is no matter; let it alone"; and so it passed.

All the time I sat with Mrs. Bargrave, which was some hours, she recollected fresh sayings of Mrs. Veal. And one material thing more she told Mrs. Bargrave—that old Mr. Breton allowed Mrs. Veal ten pounds a year, which was a secret, and unknown to Mrs. Bargrave till Mrs. Veal told it her. Mrs. Bargrave never varies in her story, which puzzles those who doubt of the truth, or are unwilling to believe it. A servant in a neighbour's yard adjoining to Mrs. Bargrave's house heard her talking to somebody an hour of the time Mrs. Veal was with her. Mrs. Bargrave went out to her next neighbour's the very moment she parted with Mrs. Veal, and told what ravishing conversation she had with an old friend, and told the whole of it. Drelincourt's Book of Death is, since this happened, bought up strangely. And it is to be observed that, notwithstanding all this trouble and fatigue Mrs. Bargrave has undergone upon this account, she never took the value of a farthing, nor suffered her daughter to take anything of anybody, and therefore can have no interest in telling the story.

But Mr. Veal does what he can to stifle the matter, and said he would see Mrs. Bargrave; but yet it is certain matter of fact that he has been at Captain Watson's since the death of his sister, and yet never went near Mrs. Bargrave; and some of her friends report her to be a great liar, and that she

knew of Mr. Breton's ten pounds a year. But the person who pretends to say so has the reputation of a notorious liar among persons whom I know to be of undoubted repute. Now, Mr. Veal is more a gentleman than to say she lies, but says a bad husband has crazed her; but she needs only to present herself, and it will effectually confute that pretence. Mr. Veal says he asked his sister on her deathbed whether she had a mind to dispose of anything, and she said: "No." Now, the things which Mrs. Veal's apparition would have disposed of were so trifling, and nothing of justice aimed at in their disposal, that the design of it appears to me to be only in order to make Mrs. Bargrave so to demonstrate the truth of her appearance, as to satisfy the world of the reality thereof as to what she had seen and heard, and to secure her reputation among the reasonable and understanding part of mankind. And then again, Mr. Veal owns that there was a purse of gold; but it was not found in her cabinet, but in a comb-box. This looks improbable; for that Mrs. Watson owned that Mrs. Veal was so very careful of the key of her cabinet, that she would trust nobody with it; and if so, no doubt she would not trust her gold out of it. And Mrs. Veal's often drawing her hand over her eyes, and asking Mrs. Bargrave whether her fits had not impaired her, looks to me as if she did it on purpose to remind Mrs. Bargrave of her fits, to prepare her not to think it strange that she should put her upon writing to her brother to dispose of rings and gold, which looked so much like a dying person's request; and it took accordingly with Mrs. Bargrave, as the effects of her fits coming upon her; and was one of the many instances of her wonderful love to her, and care of her, that she should not be affrighted; which indeed appears in her whole management, particularly in her coming to her in the daytime, waiving the salutation, and when she was alone; and then the manner of her parting, to prevent a second attempt to salute her.

Now, why Mr. Veal should think this relation a reflection (as 'tis plain he does by his endeavouring to stifle it) I can't imagine, because the generality believe her to be a good spirit, her discourse was so heavenly. Her two great errands were to comfort Mrs. Bargrave in her affliction, and to ask her forgiveness for her breach of friendship, and with a

pious discourse to encourage her. So that, after all, to suppose that Mrs. Bargrave could hatch such an invention as this from Friday noon till Saturday noon (supposing that she knew of Mrs. Veal's death the very first moment), without jumbling circumstances, and without any interest too, she must be more witty, fortunate, and wicked too, than any indifferent person, I dare say, will allow. I asked Mrs. Bargrave several times if she was sure she felt the gown. She answered modestly: "If my senses be to be relied on, I am sure of it." I asked her if she heard a sound when she clapped her hand upon her knee. She said she did not remember she did; and she said: "She appeared to be as much a substance as I did, who talked with her; and I may," said she, "be as soon persuaded that your apparition is talking to me now as that I did not really see her; for I was under no manner of fear; I received her as a friend, and parted with her as such. I would not," says she, "give one farthing to make any one believe it; I have no interest in it. Nothing but trouble is entailed upon me for a long time, for aught I know; and had it not come to light by accident, it would never have been made public." But now she says she will make her own private use of it, and keep herself out of the way as much as she can; and so she has done since. She says she had a gentleman who came thirty miles to her to hear the relation, and that she had told it to a room full of people at a time. Several particular gentlemen have had the story from Mrs. Bargrave's own mouth.

This thing has very much affected me, and I am as well satisfied as I am of the best grounded matter of fact. And why we should dispute matter of fact because we cannot solve things of which we have no certain or demonstrative notions, seems strange to me. Mrs. Bargrave's authority and sincerity alone would have been undoubted in any other case.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

VIII

1750 TO 1800:

Memnon, Voltaire (1750).
Tales (in The Rambler), Samuel Johnson (1750–52).
Micromégas, Voltaire (1752?).
Idyllen, S. Gessner (1756–1772).
Candide, Voltaire (1758).
Rasselas, Samuel Johnson (1759).
Contes Moraux, J. F. Marmontel (1761).
Jeannot et Colin, Voltaire (1764?).
L'Ingénu, Voltaire (1767?).
La Princesse de Babylone, Voltaire (1768).
L'Homme aux quarante Écus, Voltaire (1768).
Le Diable Amoureux, J. Cazotte (1772).
Les Deux Amis de Bourbonne, Denis Diderot (1773).
Les Oreilles du Comte de Chesterfield, Voltaire (1775).
Les Contemporaines, Restif de la Bretonne (1780–85).
Volksmärchen der Deutschen, J. K. A. Musäus (1782–86).
Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Münchausen, R. E. Raspe? (1785).
Paul et Virginie, Bernardin de St. Pierre (1786).
Verbrecher aus Infamie, Friedrich Schiller (1787).
Vathek, William Beckford (1787).
*Fables, G. P. de Florian (1792).
Pauline, Mme. de Staël (1793).
Adélaide et Théodore, Mme. de Staël (1795).
Mirza, Mme. de Staël (1795).
Das Märchen, Goethe (1795).
Tales, in Cheap Repository Tracts, Hannah More (1795–98).
Tales, Denis Diderot, Jacques le Fataliste (1796).
Volksmärchen, J. L. Tieck (1797).
Ceci n' est pas un Conte, Denis Diderot (1798).

JEANNOT AND COLIN

JEANNOT AND COLIN

THE great name of Voltaire (1694–1778) is not usually associated with short stories. And yet, with an irony that he himself would have appreciated, his short tales now seem, of all his works, that part that will endure the longest. Jeannot and Colin, the example of his fiction presented in this volume, was probably written in 1764. It is both one of the briefest and one of the most artistic of all Voltaire's fictions.

The story with a purpose, as has already been noted, is perhaps the most characteristic form of the short story in the eighteenth century. Take away the moral from Jeannot and Colin, and how much is left? "It may be doubted," says George Saintsbury, "whether any of his works displays his peculiar genius more fully and more characteristically than the short tales in prose which he has left. Every one of them has a moral, political, social, or theological purpose." Among Voltaire's principal tales may be mentioned: Babouc (1746), Zadig (1747?), Memnon (1750), Micromégas (1752?), Candide (1758), Jeannot and Colin (1764?), L'Ingénu (1767?), The Man of Forty Crowns (1768). The dates of many of his writings are uncertain, including those of the four tales queried above.

The present version of Jeannot and Colin is that by Robert Bruce Boswell, in the Bohn Library.

AUTHORITIES:

Voltaire, by John Morley.
Life of Voltaire, by James Parton.
Life of Voltaire, by F. Espinasse (Great Writers series).

JEANNOT AND COLIN

Many trustworthy persons have seen Jeannot and Colin when they went to school at Issoire in Auvergne, a town famous all over the world for its college and its kettles. Jeannot was the son of a dealer in mules, a man of considerable reputation; Colin owed his existence to a worthy husbandman who dwelt in the outskirts of the town, and cultivated his farm with the help of four mules, and who, after paying tolls and tallage, scutage and salt-duty, poundage, poll-tax, and tithes, did not find himself particularly well off at the end of the year.

Jeannot and Colin were very handsome lads for natives of Auvergne; they were much attached to each other, and had little secrets together and private understandings, such as old comrades always recall with pleasure when they afterwards meet in a wider world.

Their schooldays were drawing near their end, when a tailor one day brought Jeannot a velvet coat of three colours with a waistcoat of Lyons silk to match in excellent taste; this suit of clothes was accompanied by a letter addressed to Monsieur de la Jeannotière. Colin admired the coat, and was not at all jealous; but Jeannot assumed an air of superiority which distressed Colin. From that moment Jeannot paid no more heed to his lessons, but was always looking at his reflection in the glass, and despised everybody but himself. Some time afterwards a footman arrived post-haste, bringing a second letter, addressed this time to His Lordship the Marquis de la Jeannotière; it contained an order from his father for the young nobleman, his son, to be sent to Paris. As Jeannot mounted the chaise to drive off, he stretched out his hand to Colin with a patronising smile befitting his rank. Colin felt his own insignificance, and wept. So Jeannot departed in all his glory.

Readers who like to know all about things may be in formed that Monsieur Jeannot, the father, had rapidly gaine immense wealth in business. You ask how those great for tunes are made? It all depends upon luck. Monsieur Jean notière had a comely person, and so had his wife; moreove her complexion was fresh and blooming. They had gone t Paris to prosecute a lawsuit which was ruining them, whe Fortune, who lifts up and casts down human beings, at he pleasure, presented them with an introduction to the wif of an army-hospital contractor, a man of great talent, wh could boast of having killed more soldiers in one year than th cannon had destroyed in ten. Jeannot took the lady's fancy and Jeannot's wife captivated the gentleman. Jeannot soo became a partner in the business, and entered into other spec ulations. When one is in the current of the stream it is onl necessary to let oneself drift, and so an immense fortun may sometimes be made without any trouble. The beggar who watch you from the bank, as you glide along in full sai open their eyes in astonishment; they wonder how you hav managed to get on; they envy you at all events, and writ pamphlets against you which you never read. That was wha happened to Jeannot senior, who was soon styled Monsieur la Jeannotière, and, after buying a marquisate at the end c six months, he took the young nobleman his son away fr school, to launch him into the fashionable world of Paris.

Colin, always affectionately disposed, wrote a kind lett to his old schoolfellow in order to offer his congratulatio The little marquis sent him no answer, which grieved Co sorely.

The first thing that his father and mother did for t young gentleman was to get him a tutor. This tutor, w was a man of distinguished manners and profound ign rance, could teach his pupil nothing. The marquis wish his son to learn Latin, but the marchioness would not he of it. They consulted the opinion of a certain author w had obtained considerable celebrity at that time from so popular works which he had written. He was invited dinner, and the master of the house began by saying:

"Sir, as you know Latin, and are conversant with t manners of the Court——"

"I, sir! Latin! I don't know a word of it," answe

the man of wit; "and it is just as well for me that I don't, for one can speak one's own language better, when the attention is not divided between it and foreign tongues. Look at all our ladies; they are far more charming in conversation than men, their letters are written with a hundred times more grace of expression. They owe that superiority over us to nothing else but their ignorance of Latin."

"There now! Was I not right?" said the lady. "I want my son to be a man of wit, and to make way in the world. You see that if he were to learn Latin, it would be his ruin. Tell me, if you please, are plays and operas performed in Latin? Are the proceedings in court conducted in Latin, when one has a lawsuit on hand? Do people make love in Latin?"

The marquis, confounded by these arguments, passed sentence, and it was decided that the young nobleman should not waste his time in studying Cicero, Horace, and Virgil.

"But what is he to learn then? For still, I suppose, he will have to know something. Might he not be taught a little geography?"

"What good will that do him?" answered the tutor. "When my lord marquis goes to visit his country-seat, will not his postillions know the roads? There will be no fear of their going astray. One does not want a sextant in order to travel, and it is quite possible to make a journey between Paris and Auvergne without knowing anything about the latitude and longitude of either."

"Very true," replied the father; "but I have heard people speak of a noble science, which is, I think, called *astronomy*."

"Bless my soul!" rejoined the tutor. "Do we regulate our behaviour in this world by the stars? Why should my lord marquis wear himself out in calculating an eclipse, when he will find it predicted correctly to a second in the almanac, which will moreover inform him of all the movable feasts, the age of the moon, and that of all the princesses in Europe?"

The marchioness was quite of the tutor's opinion, the little marquis was in a state of the highest delight, and his father was very undecided.

"What then is my son to be taught?" said he.

"To make himself agreeable," answered the friend whom

they had consulted; "for, if he knows the way to please, he will know everything worth knowing; it is an art which he will learn from her ladyship, his mother, without the least trouble to either of them."

The marchioness, at these words, smiled graciously upon the courtly ignoramus, and said:

It is easy to see, sir, that you are a most accomplished gentleman; my son will owe all his education to you. I imagine, however, that it will not be a bad thing for him to know a little history."

"Nay, madame—what good would that do him?" he answered. "Assuredly the only entertaining and useful history is that of the passing hour. All ancient histories, as one of our clever writers[1] has observed, are admitted to be nothing but fables; and for us moderns it is an inextricable chaos. What does it matter to the young gentleman, your son, if Charlemagne instituted the twelve Paladins of France, or if his successor[2] had an impediment in his speech?"

"Nothing was ever said more wisely!" exclaimed the tutor. "The minds of children are smothered under a mass of useless knowledge; but of all sciences that which seems to me the most absurd, and the one best adapted to extinguish every spark of genius, is geometry. That ridiculous science is concerned with surfaces, lines, and points which have no existence in nature. In imagination a hundred thousand curved lines may be made to pass between a circle and a straight line which touches it, although in reality you could not insert so much as a straw. Geometry, indeed, is nothing more than a bad joke."

The marquis and his lady did not understand much of the meaning of what the tutor was saying; but they were quite of his way of thinking.

"A nobleman like his lordship," he continued, "should not dry up his brain with such unprofitable studies. If, some day, he should require one of those sublime geometricians to draw a plan of his estates, he can have them measured for his money. If he should wish to trace out the

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[1] Bernard Fontenelle, who died in the year 1757.—[ED.]

[2] Louis le Bègue, i. e., the Stammerer, was third in succession from Charlemagne.—[ED.]

antiquity of his lineage, which goes back to the most remote ages, all he will have to do will be to send for some learned Benedictine. It is the same with all the other arts. A young lord born under a lucky star is neither a painter, nor a musician, nor an architect, nor a sculptor; but he may make all these arts flourish by encouraging them with his generous approval. Doubtless it is much better to patronise than to practise them. It will be quite enough if my lord the young marquis has taste; it is the part of artists to work for him, and thus there is a great deal of truth in the remark that people of quality (that is, if they are very rich) know everything without learning anything, because, in point of fact and in the long run, they are masters of all the knowledge which they can command and pay for."

The agreeable ignoramus then took part again in the conversation, and said:

"You have well remarked, madame, that the great end of man's existence is to succeed in society. Is it, forsooth, any aid to the attainment of this success to have devoted oneself to the sciences? Does any one ever think in select company of talking about geometry? Is a well-bred gentleman ever asked what star rises to-day with the sun? Does any one at the supper-table ever want to know if Clodion the Long-Haired crossed the Rhine?"

"No, indeed!" exclaimed the Marchioness de la Jeannotière, whose charms had been her passport into the world of fashion; "and my son must not stifle his genius by studying all that trash. But, after all, what is he to be taught? For it is a good thing that a young lord should be able to shine when occasion offers, as my noble husband has said. I remember once hearing an abbé remark that the most entertaining science was something the name of which I have forgotten—it begins with a *b*."

"With a *b*, madame? It was not botany, was it?"

"No, it certainly was not botany that he mentioned; it began, as I tell you, with a *b*, and ended in *onry*."

"Ah, madame, I understand! It was blazonry or heraldry. That is indeed a most profound science; but it has ceased to be fashionable since the custom has died out of having one's coat of arms painted on the carriage-doors; it was the most useful thing imaginable in a well-ordered state.

Besides, that line of study would be endless, for at the present day there is not a barber who is without his armorial bearings, and you know that whatever becomes common loses its attraction."

Finally, after all the pros and cons of the different sciences had been examined and discussed, it was decided that the young marquis should learn dancing.

Dame Nature, who disposes everything at her own will and pleasure, had given him a talent which soon developed itself with prodigious success; it was that of singing street-ballads in a charming style. His youthful grace accompanying this superlative gift, caused him to be regarded as a young man of the highest promise. He was a favourite with the ladies, and, having his head crammed with songs, he had no lack of mistresses to whom to address his verses. He stole the line, "Bacchus with the Loves at play," from one ballad; and made it rhyme with "night and day" taken out of another, while a third furnished him with "charms" and "alarms." But inasmuch as there were always some feet more or less than were wanted in his verses, he had them corrected at the rate of twenty sovereigns a song. And The Literary Year placed him in the same rank with such sonneteers as La Fare, Chaulieu, Hamilton, Sarrasin, and Voiture.

Her ladyship the marchioness then believed that she was indeed the mother of a genius, and gave a supper to all the wits of Paris. The young man's head was soon turned upside down, he acquired the art of talking without knowing the meaning of what he said, and perfected himself in the habit of being fit for nothing. When his father saw him so eloquent, he keenly regretted that he had not had him taught Latin, or he would have purchased some high appointment for him in the Law. His mother, who was of more heroic sentiments, took upon herself to solicit a regiment for her son; in the meantime he made love—and love is sometimes more expensive than a regiment. He squandered his money freely, while his parents drained their purses and credit to a lower and lower ebb by living in the grandest style.

A young widow of good position in their neighbourhood, who had only a moderate income, was well enough dis-

posed to make some effort to prevent the great wealth of the Marquis and Marchioness de la Jeannotière from going altogether, by marrying the young marquis and so appropriating what remained. She enticed him to her house, let him make love to her, allowed him to see that she was not quite indifferent to him, led him on by degrees, enchanted him, and made him her devoted slave without the least difficulty. She would give him at one time commendation and at another time counsel; she became his father's and mother's best friend. An old neighbour proposed marriage; the parents, dazzled with the splendour of the alliance, joyfully fell in with the scheme, and gave their only son to their most intimate lady friend. The young marquis was thus about to wed a woman whom he adored, and by whom he was beloved in return. The friends of the family congratulated him, the marriage settlement was on the point of being signed, the bridal dress and the epithalamium were both well under way.

One morning our young gentleman was on his knees before the charmer whom fond affection and esteem were so soon to make his own; they were tasting in animated and tender converse the first fruits of future happiness; they were settling how they should lead a life of perfect bliss, when one of his lady mother's footmen presented himself, scared out of his wits.

"Here's fine news which may surprise you!" said he; "the bailiffs are in the house of my lord and lady, removing the furniture. All has been seized by the creditors. They talk of personal arrest, and I am going to do what I can to get my wages paid."

"Let us see what has happened," said the marquis, "and discover the meaning of all this."

"Yes," said the widow, "go and punish those rascals—go, quick!"

He hurried homewards, he arrived at the house, his father was already in prison, all the servants had fled, each in a different direction, carrying off whatever they could lay their hands upon. His mother was alone, helpless, forlorn, and bathed in tears; she had nothing left her but the remembrance of her former prosperity, her beauty, her faults, and her foolish extravagance.

After the son had condoled with his mother for a long time, he said at last:

"Let us not despair; this young widow loves me to distraction; she is even more generous than she is wealthy, I can assure you; I will fly to her for succour, and bring her to you."

So he returns to his mistress, and finds her conversing in private with a fascinating young officer.

"What! Is that you, my Lord de la Jeannotière? What business have you with me? How can you leave your mother by herself in this way? Go, and stay with the poor woman, and tell her that she shall always have my good wishes. I am in want of a waiting-woman now, and will gladly give her the preference."

"My lad," said the officer, "you seem pretty tall and straight; if you would like to enter my company, I will make it worth your while to enlist."

The marquis, stupefied with astonishment, and secretly enraged, went off in search of his former tutor, confided to him all his troubles, and asked his advice. He proposed that he should become, like himself, a tutor of the young.

"Alas! I know nothing; you have taught me nothing whatever, and you are the primary cause of all my unhappiness." And as he spoke he began to sob.

"Write novels," said a wit who was present; "it is an excellent resource to fall back upon at Paris."

The young man, in more desperate straits than ever, hastened to the house of his mother's father confessor; he was a Theatine[1] monk of the very highest reputation, who directed the souls of none but ladies of the first rank in society. As soon as he saw him, the reverend gentleman rushed to meet him.

"Good gracious! My lord marquis, where is your carriage? How is your honoured mother, the marchioness?"

The unfortunate young fellow related the disaster that had befallen his family. As he explained the matter further the

[1] The Theatines are a religious brotherhood now confined to Italy, formed in 1524. Their first superior was one of the four founders of the order, Caraffa, Bishop of Theate (Chieti); hence their name.—[Ed.]

Theatine assumed a graver air, one of less concern and more self-importance.

"My son, herein you may see the hand of Providence; riches serve only to corrupt the heart. The Almighty has shown special favour then to your mother in reducing her to beggary. Yes, sir, so much the better!—she is now sure of her salvation."

"But, father, in the meantime are there no means of obtaining some succour in this world?"

"Farewell, my son! There is a lady of the Court waiting for me."

The marquis felt ready to faint. He was treated after much the same manner by all his friends, and learned to know the world better in half a day than in all the rest of his life.

As he was plunged in overwhelming despair, he saw an old-fashioned travelling-chaise, more like a covered tumbril than anything else, and furnished with leather curtains, followed by four enormous waggons all heavily laden. In the chaise was a young man in rustic attire; his round and rubicund face had an air of kindness and good temper. His little wife, whose sunburnt countenance had a pleasing if not a refined expression, was jolted about as she sat beside him. The vehicle did not go quite so fast as a dandy's chariot, the traveller had plenty of time to look at the marquis, as he stood motionless, absorbed in his grief.

"Oh! good Heavens!" he exclaimed; "I believe that is Jeannot there!"

Hearing that name the marquis raised his eyes—the chaise stopped.

"'Tis Jeannot himself! Yes, it is Jeannot!"

The plump little man with one leap sprang to the ground, and ran to embrace his old companion. Jeannot recognised Colin; signs of sorrow and shame covered his countenance.

"You have forsaken your old friend," said Colin; "but be you as grand a lord as you like, I shall never cease to love you."

Jeannot, confounded and cut to the heart, told him with sobs something of his history.

"Come into the inn where I am lodging, and tell me the

rest," said Colin; "kiss my little wife, and let us go and dine together."

They went, all three of them, on foot, and the baggage followed.

"What in the world is all this paraphernalia? Does it belong to you?"

"Yes, it is all mine and my wife's; we are just come from the country. I am at the head of a large tin, iron, and copper factory, and have married the daughter of a rich tradesman and general provider of all useful commodities for great folks and small. We work hard, and God gives us his blessing. We are satisfied with our condition in life, and are quite happy. We will help our friend Jeannot. Give up being a marquis; all the grandeur in the world is not equal in value to a good friend. You will return with me into the country; I will teach you my trade, it is not a difficult one to learn; I will give you a share in the business, and we will live together with light hearts in that corner of the earth where we were born."

Jeannot, overcome by this kindness, felt himself divided between sorrow and joy, tenderness and shame; and he said within himself:

"All my fashionable friends have proved false to me, and Colin, whom I despised, is the only one who comes to my succour. What a lesson!"

Colin's generosity developed in Jeannot's heart the germ of that good disposition which the world had not yet choked. He felt that he could not desert his father and mother.

"We will take care of your mother," said Colin; "and as for the good man your father, who is in prison—I know something of business matters—his creditors, when they see that he has nothing more, will agree to a moderate composition. I will see to all that myself."

Colin was as good as his word, and succeeded in effecting the father's release from prison. Jeannot returned to his old home with his parents, who resumed their former occupation. He married Colin's sister, who, being like her brother in disposition, rendered her husband very happy. And so Jeannot the father, and Jeannotte the mother, and Jeannot the son came to see that vanity is no true source of happiness.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

IX

1800 TO 1820:

Moral Tales, Maria Edgeworth (1801).
Atala, F. R. A. Châteaubriand (1801).
Nouveaux Contes Moraux, J. F. Marmontel (1801).
René, F. R. A. Châteaubriand (1802).
Tales of Fashionable Life (1st series), Maria Edgeworth (1809).
Reise des Feldpredigers Schmelzle nach Fläz, J. P. F. Richter (1809).
Die Neue Melusine, Goethe (1809).
Undine, F. de la Motte Fouqué (1811).
Le Lépreux de la Cité d'Aoste, Xavier de Maistre (1812).
Tales of Fashionable Life (2d series), Maria Edgeworth (1812).
Kinder- und Haus-Märchen, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (1812–1815).
Peter Schlemihls Wundersame Geschichte, A. von Chamisso (1814).
Phantasiestücke, Amadäus Hoffman (1814–15).
La Jeune Sibérienne, Xavier de Maistre (1815).
Les Prisonniers du Caucase, Xavier de Maistre (1815).
Deutsche Sagen, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm (1816–1818).
Nachtstücke, Amadäus Hoffman (1817).
Die Geschichte vom Braven Kasperl, Clemens Brentano (1817).
The Sketch-Book, Washington Irving (1819).
Die Serapionsbrüder, Amadäus Hoffman (1819–21).
A Tale for a Chimney Corner (in The Indicator), Leigh Hunt (1819).

RIP VAN WINKLE

RIP VAN WINKLE

In May, 1819, appeared the first part of The Sketch-Book, by Washington Irving (1783–1859). The parts were collected in a volume in 1820. Among other stories in the book was Rip Van Winkle: A Posthumous Writing of Diedrich Knickerbocker. Diedrich Knickerbocker may require a word of explanation. Under that pseudonym Irving had published his Knickerbocker's History of New York (1809). Knickerbocker was the "small, elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat," who had left his lodgings, according to the Evening Post of late October, 1809, neglecting to take with him, as it developed later, "a very curious kind of written book," which proved to be A History of New York, by Diedrich Knickerbocker. This clever advertisement was so successful that Rip Van Winkle and The Legend of Sleepy Hollow were later put forth as Knickerbocker's contribution to The Sketch-Book. With the name of Diedrich Knickerbocker must have gone a potent spell, for of all Irving's writings these two tales now seem destined to survive the longest.

Of Rip Van Winkle, "it is the more remarkable and interesting," writes George William Curtis, "because, although the first American creation, it is not in the least characteristic of American life, but, on the contrary, is a quiet and delicate satire upon it. The kindly vagabond asserts the charm of loitering idleness in the sweet leisure of woods and fields against the characteristic excitement of the overflowing crowd and crushing competition of the city." It is not merely the story's kindly humour, it

is also the truth of the character and the beauty of the conception, that has proved so alluring.

Irving's principal collections of short stories and sketches, in addition to The Sketch-Book (1819), are: Bracebridge Hall (1822), Tales of a Traveler (1824), and Wolfert's Roost (1855).

AUTHORITIES:

Literary and Social Essays, by George William Curtis.

Washington Irving, by Charles Dudley Warner (American Men of Letters series).

The Life and Letters of Washington Irving, by Pierre M. Irving.

A History of American Literature, by William P. Trent (Literatures of the World series).

The Short Story in English, by Henry Seidel Canby (Chapter X).

RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulchre—— CARTWRIGHT.

[The following tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favourite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse, under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a bookworm.

The result of these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of

his work; and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labours. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby in his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbours, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection, yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger", and it begins to be suspected that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folk whose good opinion is well worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their New Year cakes; and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo medal, or a Queen Anne's farthing.]

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill Mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapours about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early time of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant (may he rest in peace!), and there were some of the houses of the original

settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived, many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbour, and an obedient, henpecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a curtain-lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and, if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favourite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighbourhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labour. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance, for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's

lance, and fish all day long without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbour even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn or building stone fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-of-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighbourhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the ol clothes, of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father' cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up wit one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought of trouble, and would rather starve on a penn than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and

everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honourable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods; but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village, which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty, George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long, lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveller. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper, learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junta were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbours could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents), perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapour curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labour of the farm and clamour of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathised as a fellow sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, while I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face; and if dogs can feel pity, I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He was after his favourite sport of squirrel-shooting, and the still solitude had echoed and reëchoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued,

he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on his silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bottom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long, blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air: "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but supposing it to be some one of the neighbourhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion—a cloth jerkin strapped round the waist—several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He

bore on his shoulder a stout keg that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long, rolling peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, towards which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheatre, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had laboured on in silence; for though the former marvelled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheatre, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the centre was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint, outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets, others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large beard, broad face, and small, piggish eyes; the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards of various shapes and colours. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting, in the parlour of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that, though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statuelike gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-lustre countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavour of excellent hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes —it was a bright, sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woebegone party at ninepins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle?"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel encrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave rois-

terers of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle!" With some difficulty he got down into the glen; he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grape-vines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheatre; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? The morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homewards.

As he approached the village he met a number of people,

but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognised for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been. Rip was sorely perplexed. "That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed. "My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it, too, was gone. A large, rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted: The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle. Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red nightcap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes;—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognised on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters: GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of Congress—liberty—Bunker Hill—heroes of '76—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired "on which side he voted." Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear "whether he was

Federal or Democrat." Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder and a mob at his heels; and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village."—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor, quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—"A Tory! a Tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for and whom he was seeking. The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbours, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired: "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin, piping voice: "Nicholas Vedder! Why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point —others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Anthony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars, too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating of such

enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point—he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair: "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name.

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her ams, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she, too, had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Wikle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed: "Sure enough! It is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbour. Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him as but one night. The neighbours stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name, who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighbourhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the Half Moon; being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name. That

his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug, well-furnished house, and a stout, cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favour.

Having nothing to do at home, and being arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor: how that there had been a Revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of His Majesty, George III., he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived

at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awakened. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighbourhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunder-storm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighbourhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE

The foregoing tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick der Rothbart, and the Kypphäuser mountain: the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity.

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvellous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of a doubt.

"D. K."

POSTSCRIPT

The following are travelling-notes from a memorandum book of Mr. Knickerbocker:

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moon in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air; until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, woe betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the wildest recesses of the Catskill Mountains and took a mischievous pleasure in wreaking all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled forests and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a beetling precipice or raging torrent.

The favourite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and, from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighbourhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe

by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter, who had lost his way, penetrated to the Garden Rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with it, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day; being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaterskill.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

X

1820 TO 1830:

Smarra, Charles Nodier (1821).
Die Flucht nach Agypten and Der Mann von Fünfzig Jahren, Goethe, Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre (1821–1829).
Trilby, Charles Nodier (1822).
Die Gemälde, J. L. Tieck (1822).
Die Verlobung, J. L. Tieck (1823).
Wandering Willie's Tale, Sir Walter Scott, Redgauntlet (1824).
Tales of a Traveler, Washington Irving (1824).
Sayings and Doings, Theodore Hook (1824–1825–1828).
The Superannuated Man, Charles Lamb (1825).
O'Hara Tales, John and Michael Banim (1825–42).
Die Novelle, Goethe (1826).
My Aunt Margaret's Mirror, Sir Walter Scott (1828).
The Tapestried Chamber, Sir Walter Scott (1828).
Mateo Falcone, Prosper Mérimée (1829).
Vision de Charles XI., Prosper Mérimée (1829).
L'Enlèvement de la Redoute, Prosper Mérimée (1829).
Tamango, Prosper Mérimée (1829).
Federigo, Prosper Mérimée (1829).
La Perle de Tolède, Prosper Mérimée (1829).

WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE

WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE

WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE, by Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832), first published in Redgauntlet in 1824, was the first short story of importance that the famous romancer wrote. The Tales of a Grandfather (1828–1829–1830) are not properly short stories, but history popularly presented. In 1828 there appeared in The Keepsake three short stories by Scott: My Aunt Margaret's Mirror, The Tapestried Chamber, and Death of the Laird's Jock. These three, together with Wandering Willie's Tale, are Scott's only important contributions to fiction in short story form.

Wandering Willie's Tale is told by one of the characters in Scott's romance, Redgauntlet, but it has no other connection with the longer work of fiction in which it is embedded. Perhaps its insertion where it so clearly offends against the unity of the narrative is a proof of Sir Walter's own high regard for its value. One critic calls it "the finest short story in the language"; this is perhaps excessive praise, but as a tale of the weird it is scarcely surpassed either by Théophile Gautier's The Dead Leman (1836) or by Robert Louis Stevenson's Thrawn Janet (1881). In brief, it stands at or very near the head of its class. Like The Dead Leman, Wandering Willie's Tale is a dream-fantasy from beginning to end; "the wildest and most rueful of dreams," Lockhart calls it. For an interesting treatment of the "ghost" story, the *conte cruel*, the reader is referred to Scott's Apology for Tales of Terror (1799).

AUTHORITIES:

Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, by John G. Lockhart.

Hours in a Library (first series), by Leslie Stephen.

Sir Walter Scott, by George Saintsbury (Famous Scots series).

Sir Walter Scott, by Richard Holt Hutton (English Men of Letters series).

WANDERING WILLIE'S TALE

"Honest folks like me! How do ye ken whether I am honest, or what I am? I may be the deevil himsell for what ye ken, for he has power to come disguised like an angel of light; and, besides, he is a prime fiddler. He played a sonata to Corelli, ye ken."

There was something odd in this speech, and the tone in which it was said. It seemed as if my companion was not always in his constant mind, or that he was willing to try if he could frighten me. I laughed at the extravagance of his language, however, and asked him in reply if he was fool enough to believe that the foul fiend would play so silly a masquerade.

"Ye ken little about it—little about it," said the old man, shaking his head and beard, and knitting his brows. "I could tell ye something about that."

What his wife mentioned of his being a tale-teller as well as a musician now occurred to me; and as, you know, I like tales of superstition, I begged to have a specimen of his talent as we went along.

"It is very true," said the blind man, "that when I am tired of scraping thairm or singing ballants I whiles make a tale serve the turn among the country bodies; and I have some fearsome anes, that make the auld carlines shake on the settle, and the bits o' bairns skirl on their minnies out frae their beds. But this that I am going to tell you was a thing that befell in our ain house in my father's time—that is, my father was then a hafflins callant; and I tell it to you, that it may be a lesson to you that are but a young thoughtless chap, wha ye draw up wi' on a lonely road; for muckle was the dool and care that came o' 't to my gudesire."

He commenced his tale accordingly, in a distinct narrative tone of voice, which he raised and depressed with con-

siderable skill; at times sinking almost into a whisper, and turning his clear but sightless eyeballs upon my face, as if it had been possible for him to witness the impression which his narrative made upon my features. I will not spare a syllable of it, although it be of the longest; so I make a dash —and begin:

Ye maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that ilk, who lived in these parts before the dear years. The country will la g mind him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. He was out wi' the Hielandmen in Montrose's time; and again he was in the hills wi' Glencairn in the saxteen hundred and fifty-twa; and sae when King Charles the Second came in, wha was in sic favour as the laird of Redgauntlet? He was knighted at Lonon Court, wi' the king's ain sword; and being a red-hot prelatist, he came down here, rampauging like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy (and of lunacy, for what I ken), to put down a' the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. Wild wark they made of it; for the Whigs were as dour as the Cavaliers were fierce, and it was which should first tire the other. Redgauntlet was aye for the strong hand; and his name is kend as wide in the country as Claverhouse's or Tam Dalyell's. Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave could hide the puir hill-folk when Redgauntlet was out with bugle and bloodhound after them, as if they had been sae mony deer. And, troth, when they fand them, they didna make muckle mair ceremony than a Hielandman wi' a roe-buck. It was just, "Will ye tak' the test?" If not—"Make ready—present—fire!" and there lay the recusant.

Far and wide was Sir Robert hated and feared. Men thought he had a direct compact with Satan; that he was proof against steel and that bullets happed aff his buff-coat like hailstanes from a hearth; that he had a mear that would turn a hare on the side of Carrifra-gauns;[1] and muckle to the same purpose, of whilk mair anon. The best blessing they wared on him was, "Deil scowp wi' Redgauntlet!" He wasna a bad master to his ain folk, though, and was weel aneugh liked by his tenants; and as for the lackeys and troop-

[1] A precipitous side of a mountain in Moffatdale.

ers that rade out wi' him to the persecutions, as the Whigs caa'd those killing-times, they wad hae drunken themsells blind to his health at ony time.

Now you are to ken that my gudesire lived on Redgauntlet's grund—they ca' the place Primrose Knowe. We had lived on the grund, and under the Redgauntlets, since the riding-days, and lang before. It was a pleasant bit; and I think the air is callerer and fresher there than onywhere else in the country. It 's a' deserted now; and I sat on the broken door-cheek three days since, and was glad I couldna see the plight the place was in—but that 's a' wide o' the mark. There dwelt my gudesire, Steenie Steenson; a rambling, rattling chiel' he had been in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes; he was famous at "hoopers and girders," a' Cumberland couldna touch him at "Jockie Lattin," and he had the finest finger for the back-lilt between Berwick and Carlisle. The like o' Steenie wasna the sort that they made Whigs o'. And so he became a Tory, as they ca' it, which we now ca' Jacobites, just out of a kind of needcessity, that he might belang to some side or other. He had nae ill-will to the Whig bodies, and liked little to see the blude rin, though, being obliged to follow Sir Robert in hunting and hoisting, watching and warding, he saw muckle mischief, and maybe did some that he couldna avoid.

Now Steenie was a kind of favourite with his master, and kend a' the folk about the castle, and was often sent for to play the pipes when they were at their merriment. Auld Dougal MacCallum, the butler, that had followed Sir Robert through gude and ill, thick and thin, pool and stream, was specially fond of the pipes, and aye gae my gudesire his gude wurd wi' the laird; for Dougal could turn his master round his finger.

Weel, round came the Revolution, and it had like to hae broken the hearts baith of Dougal and his master. But the change was not a'thegether sae great as they feared and other folk thought for. The Whigs made an unco crawing what they wad do with their auld enemies, and in special wi' Sir Robert Redgauntlet. But there were owermony great folks dipped in the same doings to make a spick-and-span new warld. So Parliament passed it a' ower easy; and Sir Robert, bating that he was held to hunting foxes instead of Cove-

nanters, remained just the man he was.[1] His revel was as loud, and his hall as weel lighted, as ever it had been, though maybe he lacked the fines of the nonconformists, that used to come to stock his larder and cellar; for it is certain he began to be keener about the rents than his tenants used to find him before, and they behooved to be prompt to the rent-day, or else the laird wasna pleased. And he was sic an awsome body that naebody cared to anger him; for the oaths he swore, and the rage that he used to get into, and the looks that he put on made men sometimes think him a devil incarnate.

Weel, my gudesire was nae manager—no that he was a very great misguider—but he hadna the saving gift, and he got twa terms' rent in arrear. He got the first brash at Whitsunday put ower wi' fair word and piping; but when Martinmas came there was a summons from the grund officer to come wi' the rent on a day preceese, or else Steenie behooved to flit. Sair wark he had to get the siller; but he was weel freended, and at last he got the haill scraped thegether —a thousand merks. The maist of it was from a neighbour they caa'd Laurie Lapraik—a sly tod. Laurie had wealth o' gear, could hunt wi' the hound and rin wi' the hare, and be Whig or Tory, saunt or sinner, as the wind stood. He was a professor in this Revolution warld, but he liked an orra sough of this warld, and a tune on the pipes, weel aneugh at a by-time; and, bune a', he thought he had gude security for the siller he len my gudesire ower the stocking at Primrose Knowe.

Away trots my gudesire to Redgauntlet Castle wi' a heavy purse and a light heart, glad to be out of the laird's danger. Weel, the first thing he learned at the castle was that Sir Robert had fretted himsell into a fit of the gout because he did no appear before twelve o'clock. It wasna

[1] The caution and moderation of King William III., and his principles of unlimited toleration, deprived the Cameronians of the opportunity they ardently desired, to retaliate the injuries which they had received during the reign of prelacy, and purify the land, as they called it, from the pollution of blood. They esteemed the Revolution, therefore, only a half-measure, which neither comprehended the rebuilding the kirk in its full splendour, nor the revenge of the death of the saints on their persecutors.

a'thegether for sake of the money, Dougal thought, but because he didna like to part wi' my gudesire aff the grund. Dougal was glad to see Stèenie, and brought him into the great oak parlour; and there sat the laird his leesome lane, excepting that he had beside him a great, ill-favoured jackanape that was a special pet of his. A cankered beast it was, and mony an ill-natured trick it played; ill to please it was, and easily angered—ran about the haill castle, chattering and rowling, and pinching and biting folk, specially before ill weather, or disturbance in the state. Sir Robert caa'd it Major Weir, after the warlock that was burnt;[1] and few folk liked either the name or the conditions of the creature—they thought there was something in it by ordinar—and my gudesire was not just easy in mind when the door shut on him, and he saw himsell in the room wi' naebody but the laird, Dougal MacCallum, and the major—a thing that hadna chanced to him before.

Sir Robert sat, or, I should say, lay, in a great arm-chair, wi' his grand velvet gown, and his feet on a cradle; for he had baith gout and gravel, and his face looked as gash and ghastly as Satan's. Major Weir sat opposite to him, in a red-laced coat, and the laird's wig on his head; and aye as Sir Robert girned wi' pain, the jackanape girned too, like a sheep's head between a pair of tangs—an ill-faur'd, fearsome couple they were. The laird's buff-coat was hung on a pin behind him, and his broadsword and his pistols within reach; for he keepit up the auld fashion of having the weapons ready, and a horse saddled day and night, just as he used to do when he was able to loup on horseback, and sway after ony of the hill-folk he could get speerings of. Some said it was for fear of the Whigs taking vengeance, but I judge it was just his auld custom—he wasna gine not fear onything. The rental-book, wi' its black cover and brass clasps, was lying beside him; and a book of sculduddery sangs was put betwixt the leaves, to keep it open at the place where it bore evidence against the goodman of Primrose Knowe, as behind the hand with his mails and duties. Sir Robert gave my gudesire a look, as if he would have withered his heart in

[1] A celebrated wizard, executed at Edinburgh for sorcery and other crimes.

his bosom. Ye maun ken he had a way of bending his brow that men saw the visible mark of a horseshoe in his fore head, deep-tinted, as if it had been stamped there.

"Are ye come light-handed, ye son of a toom whistle? said Sir Robert. "Zounds! if you are——"

My gudesire, with as gude a countenance as he could pu on, made a leg, and placed the bag of money on the tabl wi' a dash, like a man that does something clever. The lair drew it to him hastily. "Is it all here, Steenie, man?"

"Your honour will find it right," said my gudesire.

"Here, Dougal," said the laird, "gie Steenie a tass o brandy, till I count the siller and write the receipt."

But they werena weel out of the room when Sir Rober gied a yelloch that garr'd the castle rock. Back ran Dougal in flew the liverymen; yell on yell gied the laird, ilk ane mai awfu' than the ither. My gudesire knew not whether to stan or flee, but he ventured back into the parlour, where a' wa gaun hirdie-girdie—naebody to say "come in" or "gae out. Terribly the laird roared for cauld water to his feet, and win to cool his throat; and "Hell, hell, hell, and its flames," wa aye the word in his mouth. They brought him water, an when they plunged his swoln feet into the tub, he cried ou it was burning; and folks say that it *did* bubble and sparkl like a seething cauldron. He flung the cup at Dougal's hea and said he had given him blood instead of Burgundy; anc sure aneugh, the lass washed clotted blood aff the carpet th neist day. The jackanape they caa'd Major Weir, it jib bered and cried as if it was mocking its master. My gude sire's head was like to turn; he forgot baith siller and receip and downstairs he banged; but, as he ran, the shrieks cam fainter and fainter; there was a deep-drawn shivering groar and word gaed through the castle that the laird was dead.

Weel, away came my gudesire wi' his finger in his mouth and his best hope was that Dougal had seen the money-ba and heard the laird speak of writing the receipt. The youn laird, now Sir John, came from Edinburgh to see things pu to rights. Sir John and his father never 'greed weel. Si John had been bred an advocate, and afterward sat in the las Scots Parliament and voted for the Union, having gotter it was thought, a rug of the compensations—if his fathe could have come out of his grave he would have braine

him for it on his awn hearthstane. Some thought it was easier counting with the auld rough knight than the fair-spoken young ane—but mair of that anon.

Dougal MacCallum, poor body, neither grat nor graned, but gaed about the house looking like a corpse, but directing, as was his duty, a' the order of the grand funeral. Now Dougal looked aye waur and waur when night was coming, and was aye the last to gang to his bed, whilk was in a little round just opposite the chamber of dais, whilk his master occupied while he was living, and where he now lay in state, as they caa'd it, weeladay! The night before the funeral Dougal could keep his awn counsel nae longer; he came doun wi' his proud spirit, and fairly asked auld Hutcheon to sit in his room with him for an hour. When they were in the round, Dougal took a tass of brandy to himsell, and gave another to Hutcheon, and wished him all health and lang life, and said that, for himsell, he wasna lang for this world; for that every night since Sir Robert's death his silver call had sounded from the state chamber just as it used to do at nights in his lifetime to call Dougal to help to turn him in his bed. Dougal said that, being alone with the dead on that floor of the tower (for naebody cared to wake Sir Robert Redgauntlet like another corpse), he had never daured to answer the call, but that now his conscience checked him for neglecting his duty; for, "though death breaks service," said MacCallum, "it shall never weak my service to Sir Robert; and I will answer his next whistle, so be you will stand by me, Hutcheon."

Hutcheon had nae will to the wark, but he had stood by Dougal in battle and broil, and he wad not fail him at this pinch; so doun the carles sat ower a stoup of brandy, and Hutcheon, who was something of a clerk, would have read a chapter of the Bible; but Dougal would hear naething but a blaud of Davie Lindsay, whilk was the waur preparation.

When midnight came, and the house was quiet as the grave, sure enough the silver whistle sounded as sharp and shrill as if Sir Robert was blowing it; and up got the twa auld serving-men, and tottered into the room where the dead man lay. Hutcheon saw aneugh at the first glance; for there were torches in the room, which showed him the foul fiend, in his ain shape, sitting on the laird's coffin! Ower he couped as if he had been dead. He could not tell how lang he lay in

a trance at the door, but when he gathered himsell he cried on his neighbour, and getting nae answer raised the house, when Dougal was found lying dead within twa steps of the bed where his master's coffin was placed. As for the whistle, it was gane anes and aye; but mony a time was it heard at the top of the house on the bartizan, and amang the auld chimneys and turrets where the howlets have their nests. Sir John hushed the matter up, and the funeral passed over without mair bogie wark.

But when a' was ower, and the laird was beginning to settle his affairs, every tenant was called up for his arrears, and my gudesire for the full sum that stood against him in the rental-book. Weel, away he trots to the castle to tell his story, and there he is introduced to Sir John, sitting in his father's chair, in deep mourning, with weepers and hanging cravat, and a small walking-rapier by his side, instead of the auld broadsword that had a hundredweight of steel about it, what with blade, chape, and basket-hilt. I have heard their communings so often tauld ower that I almost think I was there mysell, though I couldna be born at the time. [In fact, Alan, my companion, mimicked, with a good deal of humour, the flattering, conciliating tone of the tenant's address and the hypocritical melancholy of the laird's reply. His grandfather, he said, had, while he spoke, his eye fixed on the rental-book, as if it were a mastiff-dog that he was afraid would spring up and bite him.]

"I wuss ye joy, sir, of the head seat and the white loaf and the brid lairdship. Your father was a kind man to freends and followers; muckle grace to you, Sir John, to fill his shoon—his boots, I suld say, for he seldom wore shoon, unless it were muils when he had the gout."

"Ay, Steenie," quoth the laird, sighing deeply, and putting his napkin to his een, "his was a sudden call, and he will be missed in the country; no time to set his house in order—weel prepared Godward, no doubt, which is the root of the matter; but he left us behind a tangled hesp to wind, Steenie. Hem! hem! We maun go to business, Steenie; much to do, and little time to do it in."

Here he opened the fatal volume. I have heard of a thing they call Doomsday-book—I am clear it has been a rental of back-ganging tenants.

"Stephen," said Sir John, still in the same soft, sleekit tone of voice—"Stephen Stevenson, or Steenson, ye are down here for a year's rent behind the hand—due at last term."

Stephen. Please your honour, Sir John, I paid it to your father.

Sir John. Ye took a receipt, then, doubtless, Stephen, and can produce it?

Stephen. Indeed, I hadna time, and it like your honour; for nae sooner had I set doun the siller, and just as his honour, Sir Robert, that 's gaen, drew it till him to count it and write out the receipt, he was ta'en wi' the pains that removed him.

"That was unlucky," said Sir John, after a pause. "But ye maybe paid it in the presence of somebody. I want but a *talis qualis* evidence, Stephen. I would go ower-strictly to work with no poor man."

Stephen. Troth, Sir John, there was naebody in the room but Dougal MacCallum, the butler. But, as your honour kens, he has e'en followed his auld master.

"Very unlucky again, Stephen," said Sir John, without altering his voice a single note. "The man to whom ye paid the money is dead, and the man who witnessed the payment is dead too; and the siller which should have been to the fore, is neither seen nor heard tell of in the repositories. How am I to believe a' this?"

Stephen. I dinna ken, your honour; but there is a bit memorandum note of the very coins, for, God help me! I had to borrow out of twenty purses; and I am sure that ilka man there set down will take his grit oath for what purpose I borrowed the money.

Sir John. I have little doubt ye *borrowed* the money, Steenie. It is the *payment* that I want to have proof of.

Stephen. The siller maun be about the house, Sir John. And since your honour never got it, and his honour that was canna have ta'en it wi' him, maybe some of the family may hae seen it.

Sir John. We will examine the servants, Stephen; that is but reasonable.

But lackey and lass, and page and groom, all denied stoutly that they had even seen such a bag of money as my

gudesire described. What saw waur, he had unluckily not mentioned to any living soul of them his purpose of paying his rent. Ae quean had noticed something under his arm, but she took it for the pipes.

Sir John Redgauntlet ordered the servants out of the room and then said to my gudesire: "Now, Steenie, ye see ye have fair play; and, as I have little doubt ye ken better where to find the siller than ony other body, I beg in fair terms, and for your own sake, that you will end this fasherie; for, Stephen, ye maun pay or flit."

"The Lord forgie your opinion," said Stephen, driven almost to his wit's end—"I am an honest man."

"So am I, Stephen," said his honour; "and so are all the folks in this house, I hope. But if there be a knave among us, it must be he that tells the story he cannot prove." He paused, and then added, mair sternly: "If I understand your trick, sir, you want to take advantage of some malicious reports concerning things in this family, and particularly respecting my father's sudden death, thereby to cheat me out of the money, and perhaps take away my character by insinuating that I have received the rent I am demanding. Where do you suppose this money to be? I insist upon knowing."

My gudesire saw everything look so muckle against him that he grew nearly desperate. However, he shifted from one foot to another, looked to every corner of the room, and made no answer.

"Speak out, sirrah," said the laird, assuming a look of his father's, a very particular ane, which he had when he was angry—it seemed as if the wrinkles of his frown made that selfsame fearful shape of a horse's shoe in the middle of his brow; "speak out, sir! I *will* know your thoughts; do you suppose that I have this money?"

"Far be it frae me to say so," said Stephen.

"Do you charge any of my people with having taken it?"

"I wad be laith to charge them that may be innocent," said my gudesire; "and if there be any one that is guilty, I have nae proof."

"Somewhere the money must be, if there is a word of truth in your story," said Sir John; "I ask where you think it is—and demand a correct answer!"

"In hell, if you *will* have my thoughts of it," said my

gudesire, driven to extremity—" in hell! with your father, his jackanape, and his silver whistle."

Down the stairs he ran (for the parlour was nae place for him after such a word) and he heard the laird swearing blood and wounds behind him, as fast as ever did Sir Robert, and roaring for the bailie and the baron-officer.

Away rode my gudesire to his chief creditor (him they caa'd Laurie Lapraik), to try if he could make onything out of him; but when he tauld his story, he got but the worst word in his wame—thief, beggar, and dyvour were the saftest terms; and to the boot of these hard terms, Laurie brought up the auld story of dipping his hand in the blood of God's saunts, just as if a tenant could have helped riding with the laird, and that a laird like Sir Robert Redgauntlet. My gudesire was, by this time, far beyond the bounds of patience, and, while he and Laurie were at deil speed the liars, he was wanchancie aneugh to abuse Lapraik's doctrine as weel as the man, and said things that garr'd folks' flesh grue that heard them—he wasna just himsell, and he had lived wi' a wild set in his day.

At last they parted, and my gudesire was to ride hame through the wood of Pitmurkie, that is a' fou of black firs, as they say. I ken the wood, but the firs may be black or white for what I can tell. At the entry of the wood there is a wild common, and on the edge of the common a little lonely change-house, that was keepit then by an hostler wife —they suld hae caa'd her Tibbie Faw—and there puir Steenie cried for a mutchkin of brandy, for he had had no refreshment the haill day. Tibbie was earnest wi' him to take a bite of meat, but he couldna think o' 't, nor would he take his foot out of the stirrup, and took off the brandy wholely at twa draughts, and named a toast at each. The first was, the memory of Sir Robert Redgauntlet, and may he never lie quiet in his grave till he had righted his poor bond-tenant; and the second was, a health to Man's Enemy, if he would but get him back the pock of siller, or tell him what came o' 't, for he saw the haill world was like to regard him as a thief and a cheat, and he took that waur than even the ruin of his house and hauld.

On he rode, little caring where. It was a dark night turned, and the trees made it yet darker, and he let the beast

take its ain road through the wood; when all of a sudden, from tired and wearied that it was before, the nag began to spring and flee and stend, that my gudesire could hardly keep the saddle. Upon the whilk, a horseman, suddenly riding up beside him, said: "That 's a mettle beast of yours, freend; will you sell him?" So saying, he touched the horse's neck with his riding-wand, and it fell into its auld heigh-ho of a stumbling trot. "But his spunk 's soon out of him, I think," continued the stranger, "and that is like mony a man's courage, that thinks he wad do great things."

My gudesire scarce listened to this, but spurred his horse, with: "Gude-e'en to you, freend."

But it 's like the stranger was ane that doesna lightly yield his point; for, ride as Steenie liked, he was aye beside him at the selfsame pace. At last my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, grew half angry, and, to say the truth, half feard.

"What is it that you want with me, freend?" he said. "If ye be a robber, I have nae money; if ye be a leal man, wanting company, I have nae heart to mirth or speaking; and if ye want to ken the road, I scarce ken it mysell."

"If you will tell me your grief," said the stranger, "I am one that, though I have been sair miscaa'd in the world, am the only hand for helping my freends."

So my gudesire, to ease his ain heart, mair than from any hope of help, told him the story from beginning to end.

"It 's a hard pinch," said the stranger; "but I think I can help you."

"If you could lend the money, sir, and take a lang day—I ken nae other help on earth," said my gudesire.

"But there may be some under the earth," said the stranger. "Come, I'll be frank wi' you; I could lend you the money on bond, but you would maybe scruple my terms. Now I can tell you that your auld laird is disturbed in his grave by your curses and the wailing of your family, and if ye daur venture to go to see him, he will give you the receipt."

My gudesire's hair stood on end at this proposal, but he thought his companion might be some humoursome chield that was trying to frighten him, and might end with lending him the money. Besides, he was bauld wi' brandy, and desperate wi' distress; and he said he had courage to go to the

gate of hell, and a step farther, for that receipt. The stranger laughed.

Weel, they rode on through the thickest of the wood, when, all of a sudden, the horse stopped at the door of a great house; and, but that he knew the place was ten miles off, my father would have thought he was at Redgauntlet Castle. They rode into the outer courtyard, through the muckle faulding yetts, and aneath the auld portcullis; and the whole front of the house was lighted, and there were pipes and fiddles, and as much dancing and deray within as used to be at Sir Robert's house at Pace and Yule, and such high seasons. They lap off, and my gudesire, as seemed to him, fastened his horse to the very ring he had tied him to that morning when he gaed to wait on the young Sir John.

"God!" said my gudesire, "if Sir Robert's death be but a dream!"

He knocked at the ha' door just as he was wont, and his auld acquaintance, Dougal MacCallum—just after his wont, too—came to open the door, and said: "Piper Steenie, are ye there, lad? Sir Robert has been crying for you."

My gudesire was like a man in a dream—he looked for the stranger, but he was gane for the time. At last he just tried to say: "Ha! Dougal Driveower, are you living? I thought ye had been dead."

"Never fash yoursell wi' me," said Dougal, "but look to yoursell; and see ye tak' naething frae onybody here, neither meat, drink, or siller, except the receipt that is your ain."

So saying, he led the way out through halls and trances that were weel kend to my gudesire, and into the auld oak parlour; and there was as much singing of profane sangs, and birling of red wine, and blasphemy and sculduddery as had ever been in Redgauntlet Castle when it was at the blythest.

But Lord take us in keeping! what a set of ghastly revellers there were that sat around that table! My gudesire kend mony that had long before gane to their place, for often had he piped to the most part in the hall of Redgauntlet. There was the fierce Middleton, and the dissolute Rothes, and the crafty Lauderdale; and Dalyell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle; and Earlshall, with Cameron's blude on his hand; and wild Bonshaw, that tied blessed Mr. Cargill's limbs till the blude sprung; and Dumbarton Douglas, the

twice-turned traitor baith to country and king. There was the Bludy Advocate MacKenyie, who, for his wordly wit and wisdom, had been to the rest as a god. And there was Claverhouse, as beautiful as when he lived, with his long, dark, curled locks streaming down over his laced buff-coat, and with his left hand always on his right spule-blade, to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made.[1] He sat apart from them all, and looked at them with a melancholy, haughty countenance; while the rest hallooed and sang and laughed, that the room rang. But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time; and their laughter passed into such wild sounds as made my gudesire's very nails grow blue, and chilled the marrow in his banes.

They that waited at the table were just the wicked serving-men and troopers that had done their work and cruel bidding on earth. There was the Lang Lad of the Nethertown, that helped to take Argyle; and the bishop's summoner, that they called the Deil's Rattlebag; and the wicked guardsmen in their laced coats; and the savage Highland Amorites, that shed blood like water; and mony a proud serving-man, haughty of heart and bloody of hand, cringing to the rich, and making them wickeder than they would be; grinding the poor to powder when the rich had broken them to fragments. And mony, mony mair were coming and ganging, a' as busy in their vocation as if they had been alive.

Sir Robert Redgauntlet, in the midst of a' this fearful riot, cried, wi' a voice like thunder, on Steenie Piper to come to the board-head where he was sitting, his legs stretched out before him, and swathed up with flannel, with his holster pistols aside him, while the great broadsword rested against his chair, just as my gudesire had seen him the last time upon earth; the very cushion for the jackanape was close to him; but the creature itsell was not there—it wasna its hour, it 's

[1] The personages here mentioned are most of them characters of historical fame; but those less known and remembered may be found in the tract entitled The Judgment and Justice of God Exemplified; or, A Brief Historical Account of some of the Wicked Lives and Miserable Deaths of some of the most Remarkable Apostates and Bloody Persecutors, from the Reformation till after the Revolution.

likely; for he heard them say, as he came forward: "Is not the major come yet?" And another answered: "The jackanape will be here betimes the morn." And when my gudesire came forward, Sir Robert, or his ghaist, or the deevil in his likeness, said: "Weel, piper, hae ye settled wi' my son for the year's rent?"

With much ado my father gat breath to say that Sir John would not settle without his honour's receipt.

"Ye shall hae that for a tune of the pipes, Steenie," said the appearance of Sir Robert—"play us up Weel Hoddled, Luckie."

Now this was a tune my gudesire learned frae a warlock, that heard it when they were worshipping Satan at their meetings; and my gudesire had sometimes played it at the ranting suppers in Redgauntlet Castle, but never very willingly; and now he grew cauld at the very name of it, and said, for excuse, he hadna his pipes wi' him.

"MacCallum, ye limb of Beelzebub," said the fearfu' Sir Robert, "bring Steenie the pipes that I am keeping for him!"

MacCallum brought a pair of pipes might have served the piper of Donald of the Isles. But he gave my gudesire a nudge as he offered them; and looking secretly and closely, Steenie saw that the chanter was of steel, and heated to a white heat; so he had fair warning not to trust his fingers with it. So he excused himsell again, and said he was faint and frightened, and had not wind aneugh to fill the bag.

"Then ye maun eat and drink, Steenie," said the figure; "for we do little else here; and it 's ill speaking between a fou man and a fasting." Now these were the very words that the bloody Earl of Douglas said to keep the king's messenger in hand while he cut the head off MacLellan of Bombie, at the Threave Castle;[1] and that put Steenie mair and mair on his guard. So he spoke up like a man, and said he came neither to eat nor drink, nor make minstrelsy; but simply for his ain—to ken what was come o' the money he had paid, and to get a discharge for it; and he was so stout-hearted by this time that he charged Sir Robert for conscience's sake (he had no power to say the holy name), and

[1] The reader is referred for particulars to Pitscottie's History of Scotland.

as he hoped for peace and rest, to spread no snares for him, but just to give him his ain.

The appearance gnashed its teeth and laughed, but it took from a large pocket-book the receipt, and handed it to Steenie. "There is your receipt, ye pitiful cur; and for the money, my dog-whelp of a son may go look for it in the Cat's Cradle."

My gudesire uttered mony thanks, and was about to retire, when Sir Robert roared aloud: "Stop, though, thou sack-doudling son of a — ! I am not done with thee. HERE we do nothing for nothing; and you must return on this very day twelvemonth to pay your master the homage that you owe me for my protection."

My father's tongue was loosed of a suddenty, and he said aloud: "I refer myself to God's pleasure, and not to yours."

He had no sooner uttered the word than all was dark around him; and he sank on the earth with such a sudden shock that he lost both breath and sense.

How lang Steenie lay there he could not tell; but when he came to himself he was lying in the auld kirkyard of Redgauntlet parochine, just at the door of the family aisle, and the scutcheon of the auld knight, Sir Robert, hanging over his head. There was a deep morning fog on grass and gravestane around him, and his horse was feeding quietly beside the minister's twa cows. Steenie would have thought the whole was a dream, but he had the receipt in his hand fairly written and signed by the auld laird; only the last letters of his name were a little disorderly, written like one seized with sudden pain.

Sorely troubled in his mind, he left that dreary place, rode through the mist to Redgauntlet Castle, and with much ado he got speech of the laird.

"Well, you dyvour bankrupt," was the first word, "have you brought me my rent?"

"No," answered my gudesire, "I have not; but I have brought your honour Sir Robert's receipt for it."

"How, sirrah? Sir Robert's receipt! You told me he had not given you one."

"Will your honour please to see if that bit line is right?"

Sir John looked at every line, and at every letter, with

much attention; and at last at the date, which my gudesire had not observed—"From my appointed place," he read, "this twenty-fifth of November."

"What! That is yesterday! Villain, thou must have gone to hell for this!"

"I got it from your honour's father; whether he be in heaven or hell, I know not," said Steenie.

"I will debate you for a warlock to the Privy Council!" said Sir John. "I will send you to your master, the devil, with the help of a tar-barrel and a torch!"

"I intend to debate mysell to the Presbytery," said Steenie, "and tell them all I have seen last night, whilk are things fitter for them to judge of than a borrel man like me."

Sir John paused, composed himsell, and desired to hear the full history; and my gudesire told it him from point to point, as I have told it you—neither more nor less.

Sir John was silent again for a long time, and at last he said, very composedly: "Steenie, this story of yours concerns the honour of many a noble family besides mine; and if it be a leasing-making, to keep yourself out of my danger, the least you can expect is to have a red-hot iron driven through your tongue, and that will be as bad as scaulding your fingers wi' a red-hot chanter. But yet it may be true, Steenie; and if the money cast up, I shall not know what to think of it. But where shall we find the Cat's Cradle? There are cats enough about the old house, but I think they kitten without the ceremony of bed or cradle."

"We were best ask Hutcheon," said my gudesire; "he kens a' the odd corners about as weel as—another serving-man that is now gane, and that I wad not like to name."

Aweel, Hutcheon, when he was asked, told them that a ruinous turret lang disused, next to the clock-house, only accessible by a ladder, for the opening was on the outside, above the battlements, was called of old the Cat's Cradle.

"There will I go immediately," said Sir John; and he took—with what purpose Heaven kens—one of his father's pistols from the hall-table, where they had lain since the night he died, and hastened to the battlements.

It was a dangerous place to climb, for the ladder was auld and frail, and wanted anc or twa rounds. However,

up got Sir John, and entered at the turret door, where his body stopped the only little light that was in the bit turret. Something flees at him wi' a vengeance, maist dang him back ower—bang! gaed the knight's pistol, and Hutcheon, that held the ladder, and my gudesire, that stood beside him, hears a loud skelloch. A minute after, Sir John flings the body of the jackanape down to them, and cries that the siller is fund, and that they should come up and help him. And there was the bag of siller sure aneugh, and mony orra thing besides, that had been missing for mony a day. And Sir John, when he had riped the turret weel, led my gudesire into the dining-parlour, and took him by the hand, and spoke kindly to him, and said he was sorry he should have doubted his word, and that he would hereafter be a good master to him, to make amends.

"And now, Steenie," said Sir John, "although this vision of yours tends, on the whole, to my father's credit as an honest man, that he should, even after his death, desire to see justice done to a poor man like you, yet you are sensible that ill-dispositioned men might make bad constructions upon it concerning his soul's health. So, I think, we had better lay the haill dirdum on that ill-deedie creature, Major Weir, and say naething about your dream in the wood of Pitmurkie. You had taen ower-muckle brandy to be very certain about onything; and, Steenie, this receipt"—his hand shook while he held it out—"it 's but a queer kind of document, and we will do best, I think, to put it quietly in the fire."

"Od, but for as queer as it is, it 's a' the voucher I have for my rent," said my gudesire, who was afraid, it may be, of losing the benefit of Sir Robert's discharge.

"I will bear the contents to your credit in the rental-book, and give you a discharge under my own hand," said Sir John, "and that on the spot. And, Steenie, if you can hold your tongue about this matter, you shall sit, from this time downward, at an easier rent."

"Mony thanks to your honour," said Steenie, who saw easily in what corner the wind was; "doubtless I will be conformable to all your honour's commands; only I would willingly speak wi' some powerful minister on the subject, for I do not like the sort of soumons of appointment whilk your honour's father——"

"Do not call the phantom my father!" said Sir John, interrupting him.

"Well then, the thing that was so like him," said my gudesire; "he spoke of my coming back to see him this time twelvemonth, and it 's a weight on my conscience."

"Aweel then," said Sir John, "if you be so much distressed in mind, you may speak to our minister of the parish; he is a douce man, regards the honour of our family, and the mair that he may look for some patronage from me."

Wi' that, my father readily agreed that the receipt should be burned; and the laird threw it into the chimney with his ain hand. Burn it would not for them, though; but away it flew up the lum, wi' a lang train of sparks at its tail, and a hissing noise like a squib.

My gudesire gaed down to the manse, and the minister, when he had heard the story, said it was his real opinion that, though my gudesire had gane very far in tampering with dangerous matters, yet as he had refused the devil's arles (for such was the offer of meat and drink), and had refused to do homage by piping at his bidding, he hoped that, if he held a circumspect walk hereafter, Satan could take little advantage by what was come and gane. And, indeed, my gudesire, of his ain accord, lang forswore baith the pipes and the brandy—it was not even till the year was out, and the fatal day past, that he would so much as take the fiddle or drink usquebaugh or tippenny.

Sir John made up his story about the jackanape as he liked himsell; and some believe till this day there was no more in the matter than the filching nature of the brute. Indeed, ye 'll no hinder some to thread that it was nane o' the auld Enemy that Dougal and Hutcheon saw in the laird's room, but only that wanchancie creature the major, capering on the coffin; and that, as to the blawing on the laird's whistle that was heard after he was dead, the filthy brute could do that as weel as the laird himsell, if not better. But Heaven kens the truth, whilk first came out by the minister's wife, after Sir John and her ain gudeman were baith in the moulds. And then my gudesire, wha was failed in his limbs, but not in his judgment or memory—at least nothing to speak of—was obliged to tell the real narrative to his freends, for

the credit of his good name. He might else have been charged for a warlock.[1]

The shades of evening were growing thicker around us as my conductor finished his long narrative with this moral: "You see, birkie, it is nae chancy thing to tak' a stranger traveller for a guide when you are in an uncouth land."

"I should not have made that inference," said I. "Your grandfather's adventure was fortunate for himself, whom it saved from ruin and distress; and fortunate for his landlord."

"Ay, but they had baith to sup the sauce o' 't sooner or later," said Wandering Willie; "what was fristed wasna forgiven. Sir John died before he was much over threescore; and it was just like of a moment's illness. And for my gudesire, though he departed in fulness of life, yet there was my father, a yauld man of forty-five, fell down betwixt the stilts of his plough, and rase never again, and left nae bairn but me, a puir, sightless, fatherless, motherless creature, could neither work nor want. Things gaed weel aneugh at first; for Sir Regwald Redgauntlet, the only son of Sir John and the oye of auld Sir Robert, and, wae 's me! the last of the honourable house, took the farm aff our hands, and brought me into his household to have care of me. My head never settled since I lost him; and if I say another word about it, deil a bar will I have the heart to play the night. Look out, my gentle chap," he resumed, in a different tone; "ye should see the lights at Brokenburn Glen by this time."

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[1] I have heard in my youth some such wild tale as that placed in the mouth of the blind fiddler, of which, I think, the hero was Sir Robert Grierson, of Lagg, the famous persecutor. But the belief was general throughout Scotland that the excessive lamentation over the loss of friends disturbed the repose of the dead, and broke even the rest of the grave. [This note, and that on page 272, are given only in part, on account of their length and because they are not essential to the narrative.—ED.]

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XI

1830 TO 1840:

Le Vase Étrusque, Prosper Mérimée (1830).
La Partie de Trictrac, Prosper Mérimée (1830).
El Verdugo, Honoré de Balzac (1830).
Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry, William Carleton (1830).
Un Épisode sous la Terreur, Honoré de Balzac (1830).
Une Passion dans le Désert, Honoré de Balzac (1830).
Adieu, Honoré de Balzac (1830).
Evenings at the Farm of Dikanka, N. V. Gogol (1831).
Legends and Stories of Ireland, Samuel Lover (1831).
Jésus-Christ en Flandre, Honoré de Balzac (1831).
Le Chef d'Œuvre Inconnu, Honoré de Balzac (1831).
Le Requisitionnaire, Honoré de Balzac (1831).
The Gentle Boy, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1832).
La Grande Bretèche, Honoré de Balzac (1832).
Contes Drôlatiques, Honoré de Balzac (1832–1833–1837).
MS. Found in a Bottle, Edgar A. Poe (1833).
Le Nid de Rossignols, Théophile Gautier (1833).
Les Jeunes-France, Théophile Gautier (1833).
Mosaïque, Prosper Mérimée (1833).
Sketches by Boz, Charles Dickens (1833–36).
Mirgorod, N. V. Gogol (1834).
Les Âmes du Purgatoire, Prosper Mérimée (1834).
Omphale, Théophile Gautier (1834).
The Queen of Spades, Alexander Poushkin (1834).
The Pistol-Shot, Alexander Poushkin (1834?).
The Snow-Storm, Alexander Poushkin (1834?).
Tales of the Border; J. M. Wilson, and others (1834–69).

Berenice, Edgar A. Poe (1835).
The Ambitious Guest, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1835).
Un Drame au Bord de la Mer, Honoré de Balzac (1835).
Grandeur et Servitude Militaires, Alfred de Vigny (1835).
Eventyr og Historier, Hans C. Andersen (1835–72).
La Morte Amoureuse, Théophile Gautier (1836).
La Messe de l'Athée, Honoré de Balzac (1836).
Emmeline, Alfred de Musset (1837).
Deux Maitresses, Alfred de Musset (1837).
Twice-Told Tales, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1837).
La Vénus d'Ille, Prosper Mérimée (1837).
Une Nuit de Cléopâtre, Théophile Gautier (1838).
Frédéric et Bernerette, Alfred de Musset (1838).
Lady Eleanore's Mantle, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1838).
Le Fils du Titien, Alfred de Musset (1838).
Ligeia, Edgar A. Poe (1838).
Mary Ancel, W. M. Thackeray (1838).
The Avenger, Thomas De Quincey (1838).
Gockel, Hinkel und Gackeleia; Clemens Brentano (1838).
Des Lebens Überfluss, J. L. Tieck (1839).
Croisilles, Alfred de Musset (1839).
Le Paratonnere, Charles de Bernard (1839).
Le Pied d'Argile, Charles de Bernard (1839?).
Stubb's Calendar, W. M. Thackeray (1839).
La Toison d'Or, Théophile Gautier (1839).
The Fall of the House of Usher, Edgar A. Poe (1839).

THE TAKING OF THE REDOUBT

THE TAKING OF THE REDOUBT

THE TAKING OF THE REDOUBT, written by Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870) in 1829, was first published in the September–October Revue Française of that year. It was his third Short Story. Previous to its publication, in the same year, Mateo Falcone and The Vision of Charles XI. had appeared; and these three were followed before the year's end by Tamango, Federigo, The Pearl of Toledo, and The Etruscan Vase, the last being published in January, 1830. From 1830 till 1846 hardly a year passed that Mérimée did not write one or more of those short masterpieces that are still unsurpassed in French fiction, or indeed in French prose. It should be noted, moreover, that Mérimée is a master of the simple style of writing, as Gautier is of the ornate.

In addition to the stories already mentioned, especially noteworthy are: The Double Misunderstanding (1833), The Venus of Ille (1837), Arsène Guillot (1844), and Carmen (1845); but these are comparatively long stories. After the publication of The Abbé Aubain in 1846, Mérimée wrote no more fiction for nearly a quarter of a century. Lokis, his last story, appeared in 1869, and is fully up to the standard of his earlier work.

Mérimée's most salient external characteristic is perhaps his elimination of the non-essential; or, as Walter Pater expresses it, "Mérimée's superb self-effacement, his impersonality, is itself but an effective personal trait, and, transferred to art, becomes a markedly peculiar quality of literary beauty." Of Mérimée's passion for elimination, for compression, The Taking of the Redoubt is

one of the best examples. As Benjamin W. Wells has said, and other critics have not failed to remark: "It takes us in ten pages close up to the cannon's mouth with a restrained concision that makes it almost a perfect model of the Short Story."

The present version of The Taking of the Redoubt is that by George Burnham Ives, in the Mérimée volume of the Little French Masterpieces series.

AUTHORITIES:

Miscellaneous Studies, by Walter Pater.

A Century of French Fiction, by Benjamin W. Wells.

Mérimée et Ses Amis, by Augustin Filon; with a bibliography of Mérimée's complete works, by le Vicomte de Spoelberch de Lovenjoul.

THE TAKING OF THE REDOUBT

A military friend of mine, who died of a fever in Greece a few years ago, told me one day about the first action in which he took part. His story made such an impression on me that I wrote it down from memory as soon as I had time. Here it is:

I joined the regiment on the fourth of September, in the evening. I found the colonel in camp. He received me rather roughly; but when he had read General B——'s recommendation, his manner changed and he said a few courteous words to me.

I was presented by him to my captain, who had just returned from a reconnaissance. This captain, with whom I hardly had time to become acquainted, was a tall, dark man, with a harsh, repellent face. He had been a private, and had won his epaulets and his cross on the battle-field. His voice, which was hoarse and weak, contrasted strangely with his almost gigantic stature. I was told that he owed that peculiar voice to a bullet which had passed through his lungs at the battle of Jena.

When he learned that I was fresh from the school at Fontainebleau, he made a wry face and said:

"My lieutenant died yesterday."

I understood that he meant to imply: "You ought to take his place, and you are not capable of it."

A sharp retort came to my lips, but I restrained myself.

The moon rose behind the redoubt of Cheverino, about two gunshots from our bivouac. It was large and red, as it usually is when it rises. But on that evening it seemed to me of extraordinary size. For an instant the redoubt stood sharply out in black against the brilliant disk of the moon.

It resembled the crater of a volcano at the instant of an eruption.

An old soldier beside whom I happened to be, remarked upon the colour of the moon.

"It is very red," said he; "that's a sign that it will cost us dear to take that famous redoubt!"

I have always been superstitious, and that prophecy, at that particular moment especially, affected me. I lay down, but I could not sleep. I rose and walked about for some time, watching the tremendously long line of camp-fires that covered the heights above the village of Cheverino.

When I thought that the fresh, sharp night air had cooled my blood sufficiently, I returned to the fire; I wrapped myself carefully in my cloak and closed my eyes, hoping not to open them before dawn. But sleep refused to come. Insensibly my thoughts took a gloomy turn. I said to myself that I had not a friend among the hundred thousand men who covered that plain. If I were wounded, I should be taken to a hospital and treated roughly by ignorant surgeons. All that I had heard of surgical operations came to my mind. My heart beat violently, and I instinctively arranged my handkerchief, and the wallet that I had in my breast pocket, as a sort of cuirass. I was worn out with fatigue, I nodded every moment, and every moment some sinister thought returned with renewed force and roused me with a start.

But weariness carried the day, and when they beat the reveille, I was sound asleep. We were drawn up in battle array, the roll was called, then we stacked arms, and everything indicated that we were to have a quiet day.

About three o'clock an aide-de-camp appeared, bringing an order. We were ordered under arms again; our skirmishers spread out over the plain; we followed them slowly, and after about twenty minutes, we saw all the advanced posts of the Russians fall back and return inside the redoubt.

A battery of artillery came into position at our right, another at our left, but both well in advance of us. They began a very hot fire at the enemy, who replied vigorously, and the redoubt of Cheverino soon disappeared beneath dense clouds of smoke.

Our regiment was almost protected from the Russian fire

by a rise in the ground. Their balls, which, indeed, were rarely aimed at us, for they preferred to fire at our gunners, passed over our heads, or, at the worst, spattered us with dirt and small stones.

As soon as we received the order to advance, my captain looked at me with a close scrutiny which compelled me to run my hand over my budding mustache twice or thrice, as unconcernedly as I could. Indeed, I was not frightened, and the only fear I had was that he should believe that I was frightened. Those harmless cannon-balls helped to maintain me in my heroically calm frame of mind. My self-esteem told me that I was really in danger, as I was at last under the fire of a battery. I was overjoyed to be so entirely at my ease, and I thought of the pleasure I should take in telling of the capture of the redoubt of Cheverino in Madame de B——'s salon on Rue de Provence.

The colonel passed our company; he spoke to me:

"Well, you are going to see some sharp work for your début."

I smiled with an altogether martial air as I brushed my coat-sleeve, on which a shot that struck the ground thirty yards away had spattered a little dust.

It seems that the Russians observed the ill success of their cannon-balls; for they replaced them with shells, which could more easily be made to reach us in the hollow where we were posted. A large piece of one took off my shako and killed a man near me.

"I congratulate you," said my captain, as I picked up my shako; "you're safe now for to-day."

I was acquainted with the military superstition which believes that the axiom, *Non bis in idem,* has the same application on a field of battle as in a court of justice. I proudly replaced my shako on my head.

"That is making a fellow salute rather unceremoniously," I said as gaily as I could. That wretched joke was considered first-rate, in view of the circumstances.

"I congratulate you," continued the captain; "you will get nothing worse, and you will command a company this evening; for I feel that the oven is being heated for me. Every time that I have been wounded the officer nearest me has been hit by a spent ball; and," he added in a low tone and

almost as if he were ashamed, "their names always began with a P."

I feigned incredulity; many men would have done the same; many men too would have been, as I was, profoundly impressed by those prophetic words. Conscript as I was, I realised that I could not confide my sensations to any one, and that I must always appear cool and fearless.

After about half an hour the Russian fire sensibly diminished; thereupon we left our sheltered position to march upon the redoubt.

Our regiment consisted of three battalions. The second was ordered to turn the redoubt on the side of the entrance; the other two were to make the assault. I was in the third battalion.

As we came out from behind the species of ridge which had protected us, we were received by several volleys of musketry, which did little damage in our ranks. The whistling of the bullets surprised me; I kept turning my head, and thus induced divers jests on the part of my comrades, who were more familiar with that sound.

"Take it all in all," I said to myself, "a battle isn't such a terrible thing."

We advanced at the double-quick, preceded by skirmishers; suddenly the Russians gave three hurrahs, three distinct hurrahs, then remained silent and ceased firing.

"I don't like this silence," said my captain; "it bodes us no good."

I considered that our men were a little too noisy, and I could not forbear making a mental comparison between their tumultuous shouting and the enemy's impressive silence.

We speedily reached the foot of the redoubt; the palisades had been shattered and the earth torn up by our balls. The soldiers rushed at these newly-made ruins with shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" louder than one would have expected to hear from men who had already shouted so much.

I raised my eyes, and I shall never forget the spectacle that I saw. The greater part of the smoke had risen, and hung like a canopy about twenty feet above the redoubt. Through a bluish haze one could see the Russian grenadiers behind their half-destroyed parapet, with arms raised, motionless as statues. It seems to me that I can see now each

soldier, with his left eye fastened upon us, the right hidden by the levelled musket. In an embrasure, a few yards away, a man stood beside a cannon, holding a fusee.

I shuddered, and I thought that my last hour had come.

"The dance is going to begin," cried my captain. "Bonsoir!"

Those were the last words I heard him utter.

The drums rolled inside the redoubt. I saw all the muskets drop. I closed my eyes, and I heard a most appalling crash, followed by shrieks and groans. I opened my eyes, surprised to find myself still among the living. The redoubt was filled with smoke once more. I was surrounded by dead and wounded. My captain lay at my feet; his head had been shattered by a cannon-ball, and I was covered with his brains and his blood. Of all my company only six men and myself were left on our feet.

This carnage was succeeded by a moment of stupefaction. The colonel, placing his hat on the point of his sword, was the first to scale the parapet, shouting "*Vive l'Empereur!*" He was followed instantly by all the survivors. I have a very dim remembrance of what followed. We entered the redoubt; how, I have no idea. We fought hand to hand, amid smoke so dense that we could not see one another. I believe that I struck, for my sabre was all bloody. At last I heard shouts of "Victory!" and as the smoke grew less dense, I saw blood and corpses completely covering the surface of the redoubt. The guns especially were buried beneath piles of bodies. About two hundred men, in the French uniform, were standing about in groups, with no pretence of order, some loading their muskets, others wiping their bayonets. Eleven hundred Russian prisoners were with them.

The colonel, covered with blood, was lying on a shattered caisson near the ravine. A number of soldiers were bustling about him. I approached.

"Where is the senior captain?" he asked a sergeant.

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders most expressively.

"And the senior lieutenant?"

"Monsieur here, who arrived last night," said the sergeant, in a perfectly matter-of-fact tone.

The colonel smiled bitterly.

"Well, monsieur," he said, "you command in chief; order

the entrance to the redoubt to be strengthened with these waggons, for the enemy is in force; but General C—— will see that you are supported."

"Colonel," I said, "are you severely wounded?"

"Finished, my boy, but the redoubt is taken!"

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XII

1840 TO 1850:

Pierre Grassou, Honoré de Balzac (1840).
Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, Edgar A. Poe (1840).
The Bedford Row Conspiracy, W. M. Thackeray (1840).
The Murders in the Rue Morgue, Edgar A. Poe (1841).
Nouvelles Génevoises, Rodolphe Toepffer (1841).
The Masque of the Red Death, Edgar A. Poe (1842).
Twice-Told Tales (2d series), Nathaniel Hawthorne (1842).
Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten, B. Auerbach (1843).
The Pit and the Pendulum, Edgar A. Poe (1843).
A Christmas Carol, Charles Dickens (1843).
The Gold-Bug, Edgar A. Poe (1843).
The Birthmark, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1843).
Trésor des Fèves et Fleur des Pois, Charles Nodier (1844).
Carmen, Prosper Mérimée (1845).
The Purloined Letter, Edgar A. Poe (1845).
The Chimes, Charles Dickens (1845).
Nouvelles, Théophile Gautier (1845).
The Cricket on the Hearth, Charles Dickens (1845).
L'Abbé Aubain, Prosper Mérimée (1846).
The Cask of Amontillado, Edgar A. Poe (1846).
La Mare au Diable, George Sand (1846).
Mosses from an Old Manse, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1846)
Phil Fogarty, W. M. Thackeray (1847).
Le Roi Candaule, Théophile Gautier (1847).
Mrs. Perkins's Ball, W. M. Thackeray (1847).
Gamle Hans Grenader, Jörgen Moe (before 1853).

LA GRANDE BRETÈCHE

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La Grande Bretèche, by Honoré de Balzac (1799–1850), was first published in the second edition of his Scenes of Private Life, a subdivision of that portion of The Human Comedy called Studies of Manners, in 1832, under the title, The Council. Under that heading was also grouped The Message. Later, La Grande Bretèche appeared with the subtitle, Conclusion of Another Study of Woman. In the Edition Définitive of Balzac's works La Grande Bretèche was merged in Another Study of Woman, and its distinctive title disappeared altogether. Among the best of Balzac's Short Stories may be mentioned: Adieu (1830), A Passion in the Desert (1830), An Episode Under the Terror (1830), The Unknown Masterpiece (1831), The Conscript (1831), La Grande Bretèche (1832), A Seashore Drama (1835), The Succuba (Contes Drôlatiques: 1832–1833–1837).

It may be noted that, though Balzac is primarily a great French novelist, the best of his Short Stories are of the very first rank; unfortunately for them, they have been unduly overshadowed by his longer works of fiction. No other French writer, unless it be Mérimée or Maupassant, has written so many Short Stories of a high degree of excellence.

La Grande Bretèche is one of the best-known of Balzac's short pieces of fiction, and deservedly so; it takes rank among his half-dozen best of all. Contrary to a practice in which he was too prone to indulge, he is here not long in "getting under way," as George Saintsbury has remarked, and he does not waste a single stroke in drawing the dramatic close. "Indeed, the piece is so

short and so good that critical dwelling on it is almost an impertinence." As another critic, William P. Trent, has said: "This story of a jealous husband's walling up his wife's lover in a closet of her chamber is as dramatic a piece of writing as Balzac ever did, and is almost if not quite as perfect a Short Story as any that has since been written in France." In his short fictions, Balzac avoids many of the faults of his longer works.

The present version of La Grande Bretèche is that by George Burnham Ives, in the Balzac volume of the Little French Masterpieces series.

AUTHORITIES:

A Century of French Fiction, by Benjamin W. Wells.

Honoré de Balzac, by Ferdinand Brunetière (Little French Masterpieces series).

French Poets and Novelists, by Henry James.

Honoré de Balzac, by Ferdinand Brunetière (French Men of Letters series).

LA GRANDE BRETÈCHE

ɔut one hundred yards from Vendôme, on the banks Loire, there stands an old dark-coloured house, sur-ɛd by a very high roof, and so completely isolated that s not in the neighbourhood a single evil-smelling tan-r wretched inn, such as we see in the outskirts of almost small town. In front of the house is a small garden ing the river, in which the boxwood borders of the once neatly trimmed, now grow at their pleasure. A llows, born in the Loire, have grown as rapidly as the which encloses the garden, and half conceal the house. ants which we call weeds adorn the slope of the bank heir luxuriant vegetation. The fruit-trees, neglected ı years, bear no fruit; their offshoots form a dense rowth. The espaliers resemble hornbeam hedges. The formerly gravelled, are overrun with purslane; but, the truth, there are no well-marked paths. From the the mountain upon which hang the ruins of the old ıı of the Dukes of Vendôme, the only spot from which ɛ can look into this enclosure, you would say to yourself t a period which it is difficult to determine, that little was the delight of some gentleman devoted to roses lips, to horticulture in short, but especially fond of uit. You espy an arbour, or rather the ruins of an , beneath which a table still stands, not yet entirely ıed by time. At sight of that garden, which is no a garden, one may divine the negative delights of the ul life which provincials lead, as one divines the exist-f a worthy tradesman by reading the epitaph on his one. To round out the melancholy yet soothing ıts which fill the mind, there is on one of the walls a al, embellished with this commonplace Christian in-on: ULTIMAM COGITA. The roof of the house is terribly

dilapidated, the blinds are always drawn, the balconies are covered with swallow's-nests, the doors are never opened. Tall weeds mark with green lines the cracks in the steps; the ironwork is covered with rust. Moon, sun, winter, summer, snow, have rotted the wood, warped the boards, and corroded the paint.

The deathly silence which reigns there is disturbed only by the birds, the cats, the martens, the rats and the mice, which are at liberty to run about, to fight, and to eat one another at their will. An invisible hand has written everywhere the word MYSTERY. If, impelled by curiosity, you should go to inspect the house on the street side, you would see a high gate, arched at the top, in which the children of the neighbourhood have made numberless holes. I learned later that that gate had been condemned ten years before. Through these irregular breaches you would be able to observe the perfect harmony between the garden front and the court-yard front. The same disorder reigns supreme in both. Tufts of weeds surround the pavements. Enormous cracks furrow the walls, whose blackened tops are enlaced by the countless tendrils of climbing plants. The steps are wrenched apart, the bell-rope is rotten, the gutters are broken. "What fire from heaven has passed this way? What tribunal has ordered salt to be strewn upon this dwelling? Has God been insulted here? Has France been betrayed?" Such are the questions which one asks one's self. The reptiles crawl hither and thither without answering. That empty and deserted house is an immense riddle, the solution of which is known to no one.

It was formerly a small feudal estate and bore the name of La Grande Bretèche. During my stay at Vendôme, where Desplein had left me to attend a rich patient, the aspect of that strange building became one of my keenest pleasures. Was it not more than a mere ruin? Some souvenirs of undeniable authenticity are always connected with a ruin; but that abode, still standing, although in process of gradual demolition by an avenging hand, concealed a secret, an unknown thought; at the very least, it betrayed a caprice. More than once, in the evening, I wandered in the direction of the hedge, now wild and uncared for, which surrounded that enclosure. I defied scratches,

made my way into that ownerless garden, that estate which was neither public nor private; and I remained whole hours there contemplating its disarray. Not even to learn the story which would doubtless account for that extraordinary spectacle, would I have asked a single question of any Vendômese gossip. Straying about there, I composed delightful romances, I abandoned myself to little orgies of melancholy which enchanted me.

If I had learned the cause of that perhaps most commonplace neglect, I should have lost the unspoken poesy with which I intoxicated myself. To me that spot represented the most diverse images of human life darkened by its misfortunes; now it was the air of the cloister, minus the monks; again, the perfect peace of the cemetery, minus the dead speaking their epitaphic language; to-day, the house of the leper; to-morrow, that of the Fates; but it was, above all, the image of the province, with its meditation, with its hour-glass life. I have often wept there, but never laughed. More than once I have felt an involuntary terror, as I heard above my head the low rustling made by the wings of some hurrying dove. The ground is damp; you must beware of lizards, snakes, and toads, which wander about there with the fearless liberty of nature; above all, you must not fear the cold, for, after a few seconds, you feel an icy cloak resting upon your shoulders, like the hand of the Commendator on the neck of Don Juan. One evening I had shuddered there; the wind had twisted an old rusty weather-vane, whose shrieks resembled a groan uttered by the house at the moment that I was finishing a rather dismal melodrama, by which I sought to explain to myself that species of monumental grief. I returned to my inn, beset by sombre thoughts. When I had supped, my hostess entered my room with a mysterious air, and said to me:

"Here is Monsieur Regnault, monsieur."

"Who is Monsieur Regnault?"

"What! monsieur doesn't know Monsieur Regnault? That's funny!" she said, as she left the room.

Suddenly I saw a tall slender man, dressed in black, with his hat in his hand, who entered the room like a ram ready to rush at his rival, disclosing a retreating forehead, a small pointed head, and a pale face, not unlike a glass of dirty

water. You would have said that he was the doorkeeper of some minister. He wore an old coat, threadbare at the seams; but he had a diamond in his shirt-frill and gold rings in his ears.

"To whom have I the honour of speaking, monsieur?" I asked him.

He took a chair, seated himself in front of my fire, placed his hat on my table, and replied, rubbing his hands:

"Ah! it's very cold! I am Monsieur Regnault, monsieur."

I bowed, saying to myself:

"*Il Bondocani!* Look for him!"

"I am the notary at Vendôme," he continued.

"I am delighted to hear it, monsieur," I exclaimed, "but I am not ready to make my will, for reasons best known to myself."

"Just a minute," he rejoined, raising his hand as if to impose silence upon me. "I beg pardon, monsieur, I beg pardon! I have heard that you go to walk sometimes in the garden of La Grande Bretèche."

"Yes, monsieur!"

"Just a minute," he said, repeating his gesture; "that practice constitutes a downright trespass. I have come, monsieur, in the name and as executor of the late Madame Countess de Merret, to beg you to discontinue your visits. Just a minute! I'm not a Turk, and I don't propose to charge you with a crime. Besides, it may well be that you are not aware of the circumstances which compel me to allow the finest mansion in Vendôme to fall to ruin. However, monsieur, you seem to be a man of education, and you must know that the law forbids entrance upon an enclosed estate under severe penalties. A hedge is as good as a wall. But the present condition of the house may serve as an excuse for your curiosity. I would ask nothing better than to allow you to go and come as you please in that house; as it is my duty to carry out the will of the testatrix, I have the honour, monsieur, to request you not to go into that garden again. Even I myself, monsieur, since the opening of the will, have never set foot inside that house, which, as I have had the honour to tell you, is a part of the estate of Madame de Merret. We simply reported the number of

doors and windows, in order to fix the amount of the impost which I pay annually from the fund set aside for that purpose by the late countess. Ah! her will made a great deal of talk in Vendôme, monsieur."

At that, he stopped to blow his nose, the excellent man. I respected his loquacity, understanding perfectly that the administration of Madame de Merret's property was the important event of his life—his reputation, his glory, his Restoration. I must needs bid adieu to my pleasant reveries, to my romances; so that I was not inclined to scorn the pleasure of learning the truth from an official source.

"Would it be indiscreet, monsieur," I asked him, "to ask you the reason of this extraordinary state of affairs?"

At that question an expression which betrayed all the pleasure that a man feels who is accustomed to ride a hobby passed over the notary's face. He pulled up his shirt collar with a self-satisfied air, produced his snuff-box, opened it, offered it to me, and at my refusal, took a famous pinch himself. He was happy; the man who has no hobby has no idea of the satisfaction that can be derived from life. A hobby is the precise mean between passion and monomania. At that moment I understood the witty expression of Sterne in all its extent, and I had a perfect conception of the joy with which Uncle Toby, with Trim's assistance, bestrode his battle-horse.

"Monsieur," said Monsieur Regnault, "I was chief clerk to Master Roguin of Paris. An excellent office, of which you may have heard? No? Why, it was made famous by a disastrous failure. Not having sufficient money to practise in Paris, at the price to which offices had risen in 1816, I came here and bought the office of my predecessor. I had relatives in Vendôme, among others a very rich aunt, who gave me her daughter in marriage. Monsieur," he continued after a brief pause, "three months after being licensed by the Keeper of the Seals I was sent for one evening, just as I was going to bed (I was not then married), by Madame Countess de Merret, to come to her Château de Merret. Her maid, an excellent girl who works in this inn to-day, was at my door with madame countess's carriage. But, just a minute! I must tell you, monsieur, that Monsieur Count de Merret had gone to Paris to die, two months before I came

here. He died miserably there, abandoning himself to excesses of all sorts. You understand?—On the day of his departure madame countess had left La Grande Bretèche and had dismantled it. Indeed, some people declare that she burned the furniture and hangings, and all chattels whatsoever now contained in the estate leased by the said— What on earth am I saying? I beg pardon, I thought I was dictating a lease.—That she burned them," he continued, "in the fields at Merret. Have you been to Merret, monsieur? No?" he said, answering his own question. "Ah! that is a lovely spot! For about three months," he continued, after a slight shake of the head, "monsieur count and madame countess led a strange life.

"They received no guests; madame lived on the ground floor, and monsieur on the first floor. When madame countess was left alone, she never appeared except at church. Later, in her own house, at her château, she refused to see the friends who came to see her. She was already much changed when she left La Grande Bretèche to go to Merret. The dear woman—I say 'dear,' because this diamond came from her; but I actually only saw her once—the excellent lady, then, was very ill; she had doubtless despaired of her health, for she died without calling a doctor; so that many of our ladies thought that she was not in full possession of her wits. My curiosity was therefore strangely aroused, monsieur, when I learned that Madame de Merret needed my services. I was not the only one who took an interest in that story. That same evening, although it was late, the whole town knew that I had gone to Merret. The maid answered rather vaguely the questions that I asked her on the road; she told me, however, that her mistress had received the sacrament from the curé of Merret during the day, and that she did not seem likely to live through the night.

"I reached the château about eleven o'clock; I mounted the main staircase. After passing through divers large rooms, high and dark, and as cold and damp as the devil, I reached the state bedchamber where the countess was. According to the reports that were current concerning that lady—I should never end, monsieur, if I should repeat all the stories that are told about her—I had thought of her as

a coquette. But, if you please, I had much difficulty in finding her in the huge bed in which she lay. To be sure, to light that enormous wainscoted chamber of the old *régime,* where everything was so covered with dust that it made one sneeze simply to look at it, she had only one of those old-fashioned Argand lamps. Ah! but you have never been to Merret. Well, monsieur, the bed is one of those beds of the olden time, with a high canopy of flowered material. A small night-table stood beside the bed, and I saw upon it a copy of the Imitation of Jesus Christ, which, by the by, I bought for my wife, as well as the lamp. There was also a large couch for the attendant, and two chairs. Not a spark of fire. That was all the furniture. It wouldn't have filled ten lines in an inventory.

"Oh! my dear monsieur, if you had seen, as I then saw it, that huge room hung with dark tapestry, you would have imagined yourself transported into a genuine scene from a novel. It was icy cold; and, more than that, absolutely funereal," he added, raising his arm with a theatrical gesture and pausing for a moment. "By looking hard and walking close to the bed, I succeeded in discovering Madame de Merret, thanks to the lamp, the light of which shone upon the pillow. Her face was as yellow as wax, and resembled two clasped hands. She wore a lace cap, which revealed her lovely hair, as white as snow. She was sitting up, and seemed to retain that position with much difficulty. Her great black eyes, dulled by fever no doubt, and already almost lifeless, hardly moved beneath the bones which the eyebrows cover—these," he said, pointing to the arch over his eyes.—"Her brow was moist. Her fleshless hands resembled bones covered with tightly-drawn skin; her veins and muscles could be seen perfectly. She must have been very beautiful; but at that moment I was seized with an indefinable feeling at her aspect. Never before, according to those who laid her out, had a living creature attained such thinness without dying. In short, she was horrible to look at; disease had so wasted that woman that she was nothing more than a phantom. Her pale violet lips seemed not to move when she spoke to me. Although my profession had familiarised me with such spectacles, by taking me sometimes to the pillows of dying persons to take down their last wishes, I

confess that the families in tears and despair whom I had seen were as nothing beside that solitary, silent woman in that enormous château.

"I did not hear the slightest sound, I could not detect the movement which the breathing of the sick woman should have imparted to the sheets that covered her; and I stood quite still, gazing at her in a sort of stupor. It seems to me that I am there now. At last her great eyes moved, she tried to raise her right hand, which fell back upon the bed, and these words came from her mouth like a breath, for her voice had already ceased to be a voice: 'I have been awaiting you with much impatience.'—Her cheeks suddenly flushed. It was a great effort for her to speak, monsieur.—'Madame,' I said. She motioned to me to be silent. At that moment the old nurse rose and whispered in my ear: 'Don't speak; madame countess cannot bear to hear the slightest sound, and what you said might excite her'—I sat down. A few moments later, Madame de Merret collected all her remaining strength, to move her right arm and thrust it, not without infinite difficulty, beneath her bolster; she paused for just a moment; then she made a last effort to withdraw her hand, and when she finally produced a sealed paper, drops of sweat fell from her brow.—'I place my will in your hands,' she said. 'Oh, *mon Dieu!* oh!'—That was all. She grasped a crucifix that lay on her bed, hastily put it to her lips, and died. The expression of her staring eyes makes me shudder even now, when I think of it. She must have suffered terribly! There was a gleam of joy in her last glance, a sentiment which remained in her dead eyes.

"I carried the will away; and when it was opened, I found that Madame de Merret had appointed me her executor. She left all her property to the hospital at Vendôme with the exception of a few individual legacies. But these were her provisions with respect to La Grande Bretèche: She directed me to leave her house, for fifty years from the day of her death, in the same condition as at the moment that she died; forbidding any person whatsoever to enter the rooms, forbidding the slightest repairs to be made, and even setting aside a sum in order to hire keepers, if it should be found necessary, to assure the literal execution of her purpose. At the expiration of that period, if the desire of the testatrix has

been carried out, the house is to belong to my heirs, for monsieur knows that notaries cannot accept legacies. If not, La Grande Bretèche is to revert to whoever is entitled to it, but with the obligation to comply with the conditions set forth in a codicil attached to the will, which is not to be opened until the expiration of the said fifty years. The will was not attacked; and so——"

At that, without finishing his sentence, the elongated notary glanced at me with a triumphant air, and I made him altogether happy by addressing a few compliments to him.

"Monsieur," I said, "you have made a profound impression upon me, so that I think I see that dying woman, paler than her sheets; her gleaming eyes terrify me; and I shall dream of her to-night. But you must have formed some conjecture concerning the provisions of that extraordinary will."

"Monsieur," he said with a comical reserve, "I never allow myself to judge the conduct of those persons who honour me by giving me a diamond."

I soon loosened the tongue of the scrupulous Vendômese notary, who communicated to me, not without long digressions, observations due to the profound politicians of both sexes whose decrees are law in Vendôme. But those observations were so contradictory and so diffuse that I almost fell asleep, despite the interest I took in that authentic narrative. The dull and monotonous tone of the notary, who was accustomed, no doubt, to listen to himself, and to force his clients and his fellow citizens to listen to him, triumphed over my curiosity.

"Aha! many people, monsieur," he said to me on the landing, "would like to live forty-five years more; but just a minute!" and with a sly expression, he placed his right forefinger on his nose, as if he would have said: "Just mark what I say."—"But to do that, to do that," he added, "a man must be less than sixty."

I closed my door, having been roused from my apathy by this last shaft, which the notary considered very clever; then I seated myself in my easy-chair, placing my feet on the andirons. I was soon absorbed in an imaginary romance *à la* Radcliffe, based upon the judicial observations of Monsieur Regnault, when my door, under the skilful manipulation of a

woman's hand, turned upon its hinges. My hostess appeared, a stout red-faced woman, of excellent disposition, who had missed her vocation: she was a Fleming, who should have been born in a picture by Teniers.

"Well, monsieur," she said, "no doubt Monsieur Regnault has given you his story of La Grande Bretèche?"

"Yes, Mother Lepas."

"What did he tell you?"

I repeated in a few words the chilling and gloomy story of Madame de Merret. At each sentence my hostess thrust out her neck, gazing at me with the true innkeeper's perspicacity—a sort of happy medium between the instinct of the detective, the cunning of the spy, and the craft of the trader.

"My dear Madame Lepas," I added, as I concluded, "you evidently know more, eh? If not, why should you have come up here?"

"Oh! on an honest woman's word, as true as my name's Lepas——"

"Don't swear; your eyes are big with a secret. You knew Monsieur de Merret. What sort of a man was he?"

"Bless my soul! Monsieur de Merret was a fine man, whom you never could see the whole of, he was so long; an excellent gentleman, who came here from Picardy, and who had his brains very near his cap, as we say here. He paid cash for everything, in order not to have trouble with anybody. You see, he was lively. We women all found him very agreeable."

"Because he was lively?" I asked.

"That may be," she said. "You know, monsieur, that a man must have had something in front of him, as they say, to marry Madame de Merret, who, without saying anything against the others, was the loveliest and richest woman in the whole province. She had about twenty thousand francs a year. The whole town went to her wedding. The bride was dainty and attractive, a real jewel of a woman. Ah! they made a handsome couple at that time!"

"Did they live happily together?"

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! yes and no, so far as any one could tell; for, as you can imagine, we folks didn't live on intimate terms with them. Madame de Merret was a kind-

arted woman, very pleasant, who had to suffer sometimes haps from her husband's quick temper; but although he s a bit proud, we liked him. You see, it was his business be like that; when a man is noble, you know——"

"However, some catastrophe must have happened, to ke Monsieur and Madame de Merret separate so vio-ntly?"

"I didn't say there was any catastrophe, monsieur. I n't know anything about it."

"Good! I am sure now that you know all about it."

"Well, monsieur, I will tell you all I know. When I saw onsieur Regnault come up to your room, I had an idea that would talk to you about Madame de Merret in connection th La Grande Bretèche. That gave me the idea of con-ing with monsieur, who seems to me a man of good dgment and incapable of playing false with a poor woman e me, who never did anybody any harm, and yet who's ubled by her conscience. Up to this time I've never dared speak out to the people of this neighbourhood, for they're sharp-tongued gossips. And then, monsieur, I've never d a guest stay in my inn so long as you have, and to om I could tell the story of the fifteen thousand francs."

"My dear Madame Lepas," I said, arresting the flood of r words, "if your confidence is likely to compromise me, I uldn't be burdened with it for a moment, for anything in e world."

"Don't be afraid," she said, interrupting me; "you shall e."

This eagerness on her part made me think that I was t the only one to whom my worthy hostess had commu-cated the secret of which I dreaded to be the only confidant, d I listened.

"Monsieur," she began, "when the Emperor sent Span-h or other prisoners of war here, I had to board, at the pense of the government, a young Spaniard who was sent Vendôme on parole. In spite of the parole, he went every to show himself to the subprefect. He was a Spanish andee! Nothing less! He had a name in *os* and *dia,* some-ing like Bagos de Férédia. I have his name written on my gister; you can read it if you wish. He was a fine young n for a Spaniard, who they say are all ugly. He was only

five feet two or three inches tall, but he was well-built; he had little hands, which he took care of—oh! you should have seen; he had as many brushes for his hands as a woman has for all purposes! He had long black hair, a flashing eye, and rather a copper-coloured skin, which I liked all the same. He wore such fine linen as I never saw before on any one, although I have entertained princesses, and among others General Bertrand, the Duke and Duchess d'Abrantès, Monsieur Decazes, and the King of Spain. He didn't eat much; but he had polite and pleasant manners, so that I couldn't be angry with him for it. Oh! I was very fond of him, although he didn't say four words a day, and it was impossible to have the slightest conversation with him; if any one spoke to him, he wouldn't answer; it was a fad, a mania that they all have, so they tell me. He read his breviary like a priest, he went to mass and to the services regularly. Where did he sit? We noticed that later: about two steps from Madame de Merret's private chapel. As he took his seat there the first time that he came to the church, nobody imagined that there was any design in it. Besides, he never took his face off his prayer-book, the poor young man! In the evening, monsieur, he used to walk on the mountain, among the ruins of the château. That was the poor man's only amusement; he was reminded of his own country there. They say that there's nothing but mountains in Spain.

"Very soon after he came here he began to stay out late. I was anxious when he didn't come home till midnight; but we all got used to his whim; he would take the key of door, and we wouldn't wait for him. He lived in a house t we have on Rue de Casernes. Then one of our stablemen tol us that one night, when he took the horses to drink, he thought he saw the Spanish grandee swimming far out in the river, like a real fish. When he came back, I told him to be careful of the eel-grass; he seemed vexed that he had been seen in the water. At last, monsieur, one day, or rather one morning, we didn't find him in his room; he hadn't come home. By hunting carefully everywhere, I found a writing in his table drawer, where there were fifty of the Spanish gold-pieces which they call *portugaises,* and which were worth about five thousand francs; and then there were ten thousand francs' worth of diamonds in a little sealed box. His writing s

that in case he didn't return, he left us this money and his diamonds, on condition that we would found masses to thank God for his escape and his salvation. In those days I still had my man, who went out to look for him. And here's the funny part of the story: he brought back the Spaniard's clothes, which he found under a big stone in a sort of a shed by the river, on the château side, almost opposite La Grande Bretèche.

"My husband went there so early that no one saw him; he burned the clothes after reading the letter, and we declared, according to Count Férédia's wish, that he had escaped. The subprefect set all the gendarmerie on his track, but, bless my soul! they never caught him. Lepas believed that the Spaniard had drowned himself. For my part, monsieur, I don't think it; I think rather that he was mixed up in Madame de Merret's business, seeing that Rosalie told me that the crucifix that her mistress thought so much of that she had it buried with her, was made of ebony and silver; now, in the early part of his stay here, Monsieur Férédia had one of silver and ebony, which I didn't see afterwards. Tell me now, monsieur, isn't it true that I needn't have any remorse about the Spaniard's fifteen thousand francs, and that they are fairly mine?"

"Certainly. But did you never try to question Rosalie?" I asked her.

"Oh! yes, indeed, monsieur. But would you believe it? That girl is like a wall. She knows something, but it's impossible to make her talk."

After conversing a moment more with me, my hostess left me beset by undefined and dismal thoughts, by a romantic sort of curiosity, a religious terror not unlike the intense emotion that seizes us when we enter a dark church at night and see a dim light in the distance under the lofty arches; a vague figure gliding along, or the rustling of a dress or a surplice; it makes us shudder. La Grande Bretèche and its tall weeds, its condemned windows, its rusty ironwork, its closed doors, its deserted rooms, suddenly appeared before me in fantastic guise. I tried to penetrate that mysterious abode, seeking there the kernel of that sombre story, of that drama which had caused the death of three persons. In my eyes Rosalie was the most interesting person in Vendôme.

As I scrutinised her, I detected traces of some inmost thought, despite the robust health that shone upon her plump cheeks. There was in her some seed of remorse or of hope; her manner announced a secret, as does that of the devotee who prays with excessive fervour, or that of the infanticide, who constantly hears her child's last cry. However, her attitude was artless and natural, her stupid smile had no trace of criminality, and you would have voted her innocent simply by glancing at the large handkerchief with red and blue squares which covered her vigorous bust, confined by a gown with white and violet stripes.

"No," I thought, "I won't leave Vendôme without learning the whole story of La Grande Bretèche. To obtain my end, I will become Rosalie's friend, if it is absolutely necessary."

"Rosalie?" I said one evening.

"What is it, monsieur?"

"You are not married?"

She started slightly.

"Oh! I sha'n't lack men when I take a fancy to be unhappy!" she said with a laugh.

She speedily overcame her inward emotion; for all women, from the great lady down to the servant at an inn, have a self-possession which is peculiar to them.

"You are fresh and appetising enough not to lack suitors. But tell me, Rosalie, why did you go to work in an inn when you left Madame de Merret's? Didn't she leave you some money?"

"Oh, yes! but my place is the best in Vendôme, monsieur."

This reply was one of those which judges and lawyers call dilatory. Rosalie seemed to me to occupy in that romantic story the position of the square in the middle of the chessboard; she was at the very centre of interest and of truth; she seemed to me to be tied up in the clew; it was no longer an ordinary case of attempting seduction; there was in that girl the last chapter of a romance; and so, from that moment, Rosalie became the object of my attentions. By dint of studying the girl, I observed in her, as in all women to whom we devote all our thoughts, a multitude of good qualities: she was neat and clean, and she was fine-looking—that

goes without saying; she had also all the attractions which our desire imparts to women, in whatever station of life they may be. A fortnight after the notary's visit, I said to Rosalie one evening, or rather one morning, for it was very early:

"Tell me all that you know about Madame de Merret."

"Oh, don't ask me that, Monsieur Horace!" she replied in alarm.

Her pretty face darkened, her bright colour vanished, and her eyes lost their humid, innocent light. But I insisted.

"Well," she rejoined, "as you insist upon it, I will tell you; but keep my secret."

"Of course, of course, my dear girl; I will keep all your secrets with the probity of a thief, and that is the most loyal probity that exists."

"If it's all the same to you," she said, "I prefer that it should be with your own."

Thereupon she arranged her neckerchief, and assumed the attitude of a story-teller; for there certainly is an attitude of trust and security essential to the telling of a story. The best stories are told at a certain hour, and at the table, as we all are now. No one ever told a story well while standing, or fasting. But if it were necessary to reproduce faithfully Rosalie's diffuse eloquence, a whole volume would hardly suffice. Now, as the event of which she gave me a confused account, occupied, between the loquacity of the notary and that of Madame Lepas, the exact position of the mean terms of an arithmetical proportion between the two extremes, it is only necessary for me to repeat it to you in a few words. Therefore I abridge.

The room which Madame de Merret occupied at La Grande Bretèche was on the ground floor. A small closet, about four feet deep, in the wall, served as her wardrobe. Three months before the evening, the incidents of which I am about to narrate, Madame de Merret had been so seriously indisposed that her husband left her alone in her room and slept in a room on the first floor. By one of those chances which it is impossible to foresee, he returned home, on the evening in question, two hours later than usual, from the club to which he was accustomed to go to read the newspapers and to talk politics with the people of the neighbourhood. His wife supposed that he had come home, and had gone to

bed and to sleep. But the invasion of France had given rise to a lively discussion; the game of billiards had been very close, and he had lost forty francs, an enormous sum at Vendôme, where everybody hoards money, and where manners are confined within the limits of a modesty worthy of all praise, which perhaps is the source of a true happiness of which no Parisian has a suspicion.

For some time past Monsieur de Merret had contented himself with asking Rosalie if his wife were in bed; at the girl's reply, always in the affirmative, he went immediately to his own room with the readiness born of habit and confidence. But on returning home that evening, he took it into his head to go to Madame de Merret's room, to tell her of his misadventure and perhaps also to console himself for it. During dinner he had remarked that Madame de Merret was very coquettishly dressed; he said to himself as he walked home from the club, that his wife was no longer ill, that her convalescence had improved her; but he perceived it, as husbands notice everything, a little late. Instead of calling Rosalie, who at that moment was busy in the kitchen, watching the cook and the coachman play a difficult hand of *brisque,* Monsieur de Merret went to his wife's room, lighted by his lantern, which he had placed on the top step of the stairs. His footstep, easily recognised, resounded under the arches of the corridor. At the instant that he turned the knob of his wife's door, he fancied that he heard the door of the closet that I have mentioned close; but when he entered, Madame de Merret was alone, standing in front of the hearth. The husband naïvely concluded that Rosalie was in the closet; however, a suspicion, that rang in his ears like the striking of a clock, made him distrustful; he looked at his wife and detected in her eyes something indefinable of confusion and dismay.

"You come home very late,'" she said.

That voice, usually so pure and so gracious, seemed to him slightly changed. He made no reply, but at that moment Rosalie entered the room. That was a thunderclap to him. He walked about the room, from one window to another, with a uniform step and with folded arms.

"Have you learned anything distressing, or are you ill?" his wife timidly asked him, while Rosalie undressed her.

He made no reply.

"You may go," said Madame de Merret to her maid; "I will put on my curl-papers myself."

She divined some catastrophe simply from the expression of her husband's face, and she preferred to be alone with him. When Rosalie was gone, or was supposed to be gone, for she stayed for some moments in the corridor, Monsieur de Merret took his stand in front of his wife, and said to her coldly:

"Madame, there is some one in your closet?"

She looked at her husband calmly, and replied simply:

"No, monsieur."

That "no" tore Monsieur de Merret's heart, for he did not believe it; and yet his wife had never seemed to him purer and more holy than she seemed at that moment. He rose to open the closet door; Madame de Merret took his hand, stopped him, looked at him with a melancholy expression, and said in a voice strangely moved:

"If you find no one, reflect that all is at an end between us!"

The indescribable dignity of his wife's attitude reawoke the gentleman's profound esteem for her, and inspired in him one of those resolutions which require only a vaster theatre in order to become immortal.

"No," he said, "I will not do it, Josephine. In either case, we should be separated forever. Listen; I know all the purity of your soul, and I know that you lead the life of a saint, and that you would not commit a mortal sin to save your life."

At these words, Madame de Merret looked at her husband with a haggard eye.

"See, here is your crucifix; swear to me before God that there is no one there, and I will believe you, I will never open that door."

Madame de Merret took the crucifix and said:

"I swear it."

"Louder," said the husband, and repeat after me: 'I swear before God that there is no one in that closet.'"

She repeated the words without confusion.

"It is well," said Monsieur de Merret coldly. After a moment's silence: "This is a very beautiful thing that I did

not know you possessed," he said, as he examined the crucifix of ebony encrusted with silver and beautifully carved.

"I found it at Duvivier's; when that party of prisoners passed through Vendôme last year, he bought it of a Spanish monk."

"Ah!" said Monsieur de Merret, replacing the crucifix on the nail. And he rang. Rosalie did not keep him waiting. Monsieur de Merret walked hastily to meet her, led her into the embrasure of the window looking over the garden, and said to her in a low voice:

"I know that Gorenflot wants to marry you, that poverty alone prevents you from coming together, and that you have told him that you would not be his wife until he found some way to become a master mason. Well, go to him, and tell him to come here with his trowel and his tools. Manage so as not to wake anybody in his house but him; his fortune will exceed your desires. Above all, go out of this house without chattering, or——"

He frowned. Rosalie started, and he called her back.

"Here, take my pass-key," he said.

"Jean!" shouted Monsieur de Merret in the corridor, in a voice of thunder.

Jean, who was both his coachman and his confidential man, left his game of *brisque* and answered the summons.

"Go to bed, all of you," said his master, motioning to him to come near. And he added, but in an undertone: "When they are all asleep, *asleep*, do you understand, you will come down and let me know."

Monsieur de Merret, who had not lost sight of his wife while giving his orders, calmly returned to her side in front of the fire, and began to tell her about the game of billiards and the discussion at the club. When Rosalie returned she found monsieur and madame talking most amicably. The gentleman had recently had plastered all the rooms which composed his reception-apartment on the ground floor. Plaster is very scarce in Vendôme, and the cost of transportation increases the price materially; so he had purchased quite a large quantity, knowing that he would readily find customers for any that he might have left. That circumstance suggested the design which he proceeded to carry out.

"Gorenflot is here, monsieur," said Rosalie in an undertone.

"Let him come in," replied the Picard gentleman aloud.

Madame de Merret turned pale when she saw the mason.

"Gorenflot," said her husband, "go out to the carriage-house and get some bricks, and bring in enough to wall up the door of this closet; you can use the plaster that I had left over, to plaster the wall." Then, beckoning Rosalie and the workman to him, he said in a low tone: "Look you, Gorenflot, you will sleep here to-night. But to-morrow morning you shall have a passport to go abroad, to a city which I will name to you. I will give you six thousand francs for your journey. You will remain ten years in that city; if you are not satisfied there, you can settle in another city, provided that it is in the same country. You will go by way of Paris, where you will wait for me. There I will give you a guarantee to pay you six thousand francs more on your return, in case you have abided by the conditions of our bargain. At that price you should be willing to keep silent concerning what you have done here to-night. As for you, Rosalie, I will give you ten thousand francs, which will be paid to you on the day of your wedding, provided that you marry Gorenflot; but, in order to be married, you will have to be silent; if not, no dower."

"Rosalie," said Madame de Merret, "come here and arrange my hair."

The husband walked tranquilly back and forth, watching the door, the mason, and his wife, but without any outward sign of injurious suspicion. Gorenflot was obliged to make a noise; Madame de Merret seized an opportunity, when the workman was dropping some bricks, and when her husband was at the other end of the room, to say to Rosalie:

"A thousand francs a year to you, my dear child, if you can tell Gorenflot to leave a crack at the bottom.—Go and help him," she said coolly, aloud.

Monsieur and Madame de Merret said not a word while Gorenflot was walling up the door. That silence was the result of design on the husband's part, for he did not choose to allow his wife a pretext for uttering words of double meaning; and on Madame de Merret's part, it was either prudence or pride. When the wall was half built, the crafty mason

seized a moment when the gentleman's back was turned, to strike his pickaxe through one of the panes of the glass door. That act gave Madame de Merret to understand that Rosalie had spoken to Gorenflot. At that moment all three saw a man's face, dark and sombre, with black hair and fiery eyes. Before her husband had turned, the poor woman had time to make a motion of her head to the stranger, to whom that signal meant: "Hope!"

At four o'clock, about daybreak, for it was September, the work was finished. The mason remained in the house under the eye of Jean, and Monsieur de Merret slept in his wife's chamber. In the morning, on rising, he said carelessly:

"Ah! by the way, I must go to the mayor's office for the passport."

He put his hat on his head, walked towards the door, turned back and took the crucifix. His wife fairly trembled with joy.

"He will go to Duvivier's," she thought.

As soon as the gentleman had left the room, Madame de Merret rang for Rosalie; then, in a terrible voice, she cried:

"The pickaxe; the pickaxe! and to work! I saw how Gorenflot understood last night; we shall have time to make a hole, and stop it up."

In a twinkling Rosalie brought her mistress a sort of small axe, and she, with an ardour which no words can describe, began to demolish the wall. She had already loosened several bricks, when, as she stepped back to deal a blow even harder than the preceding ones, she saw Monsieur de Merret behind her; she fainted.

"Put madame on her bed," said the gentleman, coldly.

Anticipating what was likely to happen during his absence, he had laid a trap for his wife; he had simply written to the mayor, and had sent a messenger to Duvivier. The jeweller arrived just as the disorder in the room had been repaired.

"Duvivier," asked Monsieur de Merret, "didn't you buy some crucifixes from the Spaniards who passed through here?"

"No, monsieur."

"Very well; I thank you," he said, exchanging with his wife a tigerlike glance.—"Jean," he added, turning towards

his confidential valet, "you will have my meals served in Madame de Merret's room; she is ill, and I shall not leave her until she is well again."

The cruel man remained with his wife twenty days. During the first days, when there was a noise in the walled-up closet and Josephine attempted to implore him in behalf of the dying unknown, he replied, not allowing her to utter a word:

"You have sworn on the cross that there was no one there."

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XIII

1850 TO 1860:

The Great Stone Face, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1850).
Contes de la Veillée, Charles Nodier (1850).
A Child's Dream of a Star, Charles Dickens (1850).
The Diary of a Superfluous Man, Ivan Turgeneff (1850).
Gudbrand i Lien, from folk-lore stories collected by Asbjörnsen and Moe (about 1850).
The King of the Golden River, John Ruskin (1851).
Ethan Brand, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1851).
Arria Marcella, Théophile Gautier (1852).
The Snow Image, and Other Twice-Told Tales; Nathaniel Hawthorne (1852).
A Sportsman's Sketches, Ivan Turgeneff (1852).
Nouvelles, Prosper Mérimée (1852).
Mumu, Ivan Turgeneff (1852).
Immensee, T. W. Storm (1852).
A Russian Proprietor, and Other Stories; Lyof Tolstoy (1852–59).
L'Arrabbiata, Paul Heyse (1855).
Sevastopol, Lyof Tolstoy (1855).
Faust, Ivan Turgeneff (1855).
Wolfert's Roost, Washington Irving (1855).
Novellen, Paul Heyse (1855).
Kulturgeschichtliche Novellen, W. H. Riehl (1856).
Les Mariages de Paris, Edmond About (1856).
After Dark, W. W. Collins (1856).
Romans et Contes, Théophile Gautier (1857).
Synnöve Solbakken, B. Björnson (1857).
Arne, B. Björnson (1858).

The Diamond Lens, Fitz-James O'Brien (1858).
Rab and his Friends, John Brown (1858).
Dr. Manette's Manuscript, Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities (1859).
En Glad Gut, B. Björnson (1859).
The Haunted and the Haunters, Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1859).
My Double and How He Undid Me, Edward Everett Hale (1859).
What Was It?, Fitz-James O'Brien (1859).
The Wondersmith, Fitz-James O'Brien (1859).

THE BIRTHMARK

THE BIRTHMARK

THE BIRTHMARK, by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864), was first published in the March, 1843, number of The Pioneer, a short-lived monthly edited by J. R. Lowell. It was republished in the first edition of Mosses from an Old Manse, in 1846. In 1837 had appeared the first series of Hawthorne's Twice-Told Tales, which was followed in 1842 by a second series. In 1852 appeared The Snow Image, and Other Twice-Told Tales. The four volumes mentioned form Hawthorne's most important ventures in the field of the short story.

"The great charm of these stories," says Henry James, "is that they are glimpses of a great field, of the whole deep mystery of man's soul and conscience." The Birthmark is one of the finest and most significant of all the pieces of fiction that Hawthorne wrote. It is not without a trace of that morbidity which allies him, on one side of his genius, with Edgar Allan Poe; but the essential sanity of his moral, and the perfection of the workmanship, render The Birthmark worthy of its high place among the Short Stories of the nineteenth century. "The moral idea," says George E. Woodberry, "seems to flake off from the tale, like the moral of the old fable"; and what remains is a story of singular charm and pathos.

Among the best of Hawthorne's stories may be mentioned: The Gentle Boy (1832), The Gray Champion (1835), Wakefield (1835), The Ambitious Guest (1835), The White Old Maid (1835), The Minister's Black Veil (1836), David Swan (1836), The Great Carbuncle (1836), Dr. Heidegger's Experiment (1837), Lady Eleanore's Mantle (1838), Howe's Masquerade (1838), The Birthmark (1843), Drowne's Wooden Image (1844?), The Great Stone Face (1850), and Ethan Brand (1851).

AUTHORITIES:

Nathaniel Hawthorne, by George E. Woodberry (American Men of Letters series).

Nathaniel Hawthorne, by Henry James (English Men of Letters series).

Literary Essays, by Richard Holt Hutton.

Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne, by Moncure D. Conway (Great Writers series).

The Short Story in English, by Henry Seidel Canby (Chapter XII).

THE BIRTHMARK

In the latter part of the last century there lived a man of science, an eminent proficient in every branch of natural philosophy, who not long before our story opens had made experience of a spiritual affinity more attractive than any chemical one. He had left his laboratory to the care of an assistant, cleared his fine countenance from the furnace-smoke, washed the stain of acids from his fingers, and persuaded a beautiful woman to become his wife. In those days, when the comparatively recent discovery of electricity and other kindred mysteries of Nature seemed to open paths into the region of miracle, it was not unusual for the love of science to rival the love of woman in its depths and absorbing energy. The higher intellect, the imagination, the spirit, and even the heart might all find their congenial aliment in pursuits which, as some of their ardent votaries believed, would ascend from one step of powerful intelligence to another, until the philosopher should lay his hand on the secret of creative force and perhaps make new worlds for himself. We know not whether Aylmer possessed this degree of faith in man's ultimate control over nature. He had devoted himself, however, too unreservedly to scientific studies ever to be weakened from them by any second passion. His love for his young wife might prove the stronger of the two; but it could only be by intertwining itself with his love of science and uniting the strength of the latter to his own.

Such a union accordingly took place, and was attended with truly remarkable consequences and a deeply impressive moral. One day, very soon after their marriage, Aylmer sat gazing at his wife with a trouble in his countenance that grew stronger until he spoke.

"Georgiana," said he, "has it never occurred to you that the mark upon your cheek might be removed?"

"No, indeed," said she, smiling; but, perceiving the seriousness of his manner, she blushed deeply. "To tell you the truth, it has been so often called a charm, that I was simple enough to imagine it might be so."

"Ah, upon another face perhaps it might," replied her husband; "but never on yours. No, dearest Georgiana, you came so nearly perfect from the hand of Nature, that this slightest possible defect, which we hesitate whether to term a defect or a beauty, shocks me, as being the visible mark of earthly imperfection."

"Shocks you, my husband!" cried Georgiana, deeply hurt; at first reddening with momentary anger, but then bursting into tears. "Then why did you take me from my mother's side? You cannot love what shocks you!"

To explain this conversation, it must be mentioned that in the centre of Georgiana's left cheek there was a singular mark, deeply interwoven, as it were, with the texture and substance of her face. In the usual state of her complexion—a healthy though delicate bloom—the mark wore a tint of deeper crimson, which imperfectly defined its shape amid the surrounding rosiness. When she blushed it gradually became more indistinct, and finally vanished amid the triumphant rush of blood that bathed the whole cheek with its brilliant glow. But if any shifting motion caused her to turn pale there was the mark again, a crimson stain upon the snow, in what Aylmer sometimes deemed an almost fearful distinctness. Its shape bore not a little similarity to the human hand, though of the smallest pigmy size. Georgiana's lovers were wonted to say that some fairy at her birth-hour had laid her tiny hand upon the infant's cheek, and left this impress there in token of the magic endowments that were to give her such sway over all hearts. Many a desperate swain would have risked life for the privilege of pressing his lips to the mysterious hand. It must not be concealed, however, that the impression wrought by this fairy sign-manual varied exceedingly according to the difference of temperament in the beholders. Some fastidious persons—but they were exclusively of her own sex—affirmed that the bloody hand, as they chose to call it, quite destroyed the effect of Georgiana's beauty and rendered her countenance even hideous. But it would be as reasonable to say that one of those small

blue stains which sometimes occur in the purest statuary marble would convert the Eve of Powers to a monster. Masculine observers, if the birthmark did not heighten their admiration, contented themselves with wishing it away, that the world might possess one living specimen of ideal loveliness without the semblance of a flaw. After his marriage—for he thought little or nothing of the matter before—Aylmer discovered that this was the case with himself.

Had she been less beautiful—if Envy's self could have found aught else to sneer at—he might have felt his affection heightened by the prettiness of this mimic hand, now vaguely portrayed, now lost, now stealing forth again and glimmering to and fro with every pulse of emotion that throbbed within her heart; but, seeing her otherwise so perfect, he found this one defect grow more and more intolerable with every moment of their united lives. It was the fatal flaw of humanity which Nature, in one shape or another, stamps ineffaceably on all her productions, either to imply that they are temporary and finite, or that their perfection must be wrought by toil and pain. The crimson hand expressed the ineludible gripe in which mortality clutches the highest and purest of earthly mould, degrading them into kindred with the lowest, and even with the very brutes, like whom their visible frames return to dust. In this manner, selecting it as the symbol of his wife's liability to sin, sorrow, decay, and death, Aylmer's sombre imagination was not long in rendering the birthmark a frightful object, causing him more trouble and horror than ever Georgiana's beauty, whether of soul or sense, had given him delight.

At all the seasons which should have been their happiest he invariably, and without intending it, nay, in spite of a purpose to the contrary, reverted to this one disastrous topic. Trifling as it at first appeared, it so connected itself with innumerable trains of thought and modes of feeling that it became the central point of all. With the morning twilight Aylmer opened his eyes upon his wife's face and recognised the symbol of imperfection; and when they sat together at the evening hearth his eyes wandered stealthily to her cheek, and beheld, flickering with the blaze of the wood-fire, the spectral hand that wrote mortality where he would fain have worshipped. Georgiana soon learned to

shudder at his gaze. It needed but a glance with the peculiar expression that his face often wore to change the roses of her cheek into a deathlike paleness, amid which the crimson hand was brought strongly out, like a bas-relief of ruby on the whitest marble.

Late one night, when the lights were growing dim so as hardly to betray the stain on the poor wife's cheek, she herself, for the first time, voluntarily took up the subject.

"Do you remember, my dear Aylmer," said she, with a feeble attempt at a smile, "have you any recollection, of a dream last night about this odious hand?"

"None! none whatever!" replied Aylmer, starting; but then he added, in a dry, cold tone, affected for the sake of concealing the real depth of his emotion, "I might well dream of it; for, before I fell asleep, it had taken a pretty firm hold of my fancy."

"And you did dream of it?" continued Georgiana, hastily; for she dreaded lest a gush of tears should interrupt what she had to say. "A terrible dream! I wonder that you can forget it. Is it possible to forget this one expression?—'It is in her heart now; we must have it out!' Reflect, my husband; for by all means I would have you recall that dream."

The mind is in a sad state when Sleep, the all-involvi cannot confine her spectres within the dim region of her sway, but suffers them to break forth, affrighting this actual life with secrets that perchance belong to a deeper one. Aylmer now remembered his dream. He had fancied himself with his servant Aminadab attempting an operation for the removal of the birthmark; but the deeper went the knife, the deeper sank the hand, until at length its tiny grasp appeared to have caught hold of Georgiana's heart; whence, however, her husband was inexorably resolved to cut or wrench it away.

When the dream had shaped itself perfectly in his memory, Aylmer sat in his wife's presence with a guilty feeling. Truth often finds its way to the mind close-muffled in robes of sleep, and then speaks with uncompromising directness of matters in regard to which we practise an unconscious self-deception during our waking moments. Until now he had not been aware of the tyrannising influence acquired by one idea over his mind, and of the lengths which he might find in his heart to go for the sake of giving himself peace.

"Aylmer," resumed Georgiana, solemnly, "I know not what may be the cost to both of us to rid me of this fatal birthmark. Perhaps its removal may cause cureless deformity; or it may be the stain goes as deep as life itself. Again: do we know that there is a possibility, on any terms, of unclasping the firm gripe of this little hand which was laid upon me before I came into the world?"

"Dearest Georgiana, I have spent much thought upon the subject," hastily interrupted Aylmer. "I am convinced of the perfect practicability of its removal."

"If there be the remotest possibility of it," continued Georgiana, "let the attempt be made, at whatever risk. Danger is nothing to me; for life, while this hateful mark makes me the object of your horror and disgust—life is a burden which I would fling down with joy. Either remove this dreadful hand, or take my wretched life! You have deep science. All the world bears witness to it. You have achieved great wonders. Cannot you remove this little, little mark, which I cover with the tips of two small fingers? Is this beyond your power, for the sake of your own peace, and to save your poor wife from madness?"

"Noblest, dearest, tenderest wife," cried Aylmer, rapturously, "doubt not my power. I have already given this matter the deepest thought—thought which might almost have enlightened me to create a being less perfect than yourself. Georgiana, you have led me deeper than ever into the heart of science. I feel myself fully competent to render this dear cheek as faultless as its fellow; and then, most beloved, what will be my triumph when I shall have corrected what Nature left imperfect in her fairest work! Even Pygmalion, when his sculptured woman assumed life, felt not greater ecstasy than mine will be."

"It is resolved, then," said Georgiana, faintly smiling. "And, Aylmer, spare me not, though you should find the birthmark take refuge in my heart at last."

Her husband tenderly kissed her cheek—her right cheek—not that which bore the impress of the crimson hand.

The next day Aylmer apprised his wife of a plan that he had formed whereby he might have opportunity for the intense thought and constant watchfulness which the proposed operation would require; while Georgiana, likewise, would

enjoy the perfect repose essential to its success. They were to seclude themselves in the extensive apartments occupied by Aylmer as a laboratory, and where, during his toilsome youth, he had made discoveries in the elemental powers of nature that had roused the admiration of all the learned societies in Europe. Seated calmly in this laboratory, the pale philosopher had investigated the secrets of the highest cloud-region and of the profoundest mines; he had satisfied himself of the causes that kindled and kept alive the fires of the volcano; and had explained the mystery of fountains, and how it is that they gush forth, some so bright and pure, and others with such rich medicinal virtues, from the dark bosom of the earth. Here, too, at an earlier period, he had studied the wonders of the human frame, and attempted to fathom the very process by which Nature assimilates all her precious influences from earth and air, and from the spiritual world, to create and foster man, her masterpiece. The latter pursuit, however, Aylmer had long laid aside in unwilling recognition of the truth—against which all seekers sooner or later stumble—that our great creative Mother, while she amuses us with apparently working in the broadest sunshine, is yet severely careful to keep her own secrets, and, in spite of her pretended openness, shows us nothing but results. She permits us, indeed, to mar, but seldom to mend, and, like a jealous patentee, on no account to make. Now, however, Aylmer resumed these half-forgotten investigations; not, of course, with such hopes or wishes as first suggested them, but because they involved much physiological truth and lay in the path of his proposed scheme for the treatment of Georgiana.

As he led her over the threshold of the laboratory Georgiana was cold and tremulous. Aylmer looked cheerfully into her face, with intent to reassure her, but was so startled with the intense glow of the birthmark upon the whiteness of her cheek that he could not restrain a strong convulsive shudder. His wife fainted.

"Aminadab! Aminadab!" shouted Aylmer, stamping violently on the floor.

Forthwith there issued from an inner apartment a man of low stature, but bulky frame, with shaggy hair hanging about his visage, which was grimed with the vapours of the furnace. This personage had been Aylmer's underworker during

his whole scientific career, and was admirably fitted for that office by his great mechanical readiness, and the skill with which, while incapable of comprehending a single principle, he executed all the details of his master's experiments. With his vast strength, his shaggy hair, his smoky aspect, and the indescribable earthiness that encrusted him, he seemed to represent man's physical nature; while Aylmer's slender figure, and pale, intellectual face, were no less apt a type of the spiritual element.

"Throw open the door of the boudoir, Aminadab," said Aylmer, "and burn a pastil."

"Yes, master," answered Aminadab, looking intently at the lifeless form of Georgiana; and then he muttered to himself: "If she were my wife, I'd never part with that birthmark."

When Georgiana recovered consciousness she found herself breathing an atmosphere of penetrating fragrance, the gentle potency of which had recalled her from her deathlike faintness. The scene around her looked like enchantment. Aylmer had converted those smoky, dingy, sombre rooms, where he had spent his brightest years in recondite pursuits, into a series of beautiful apartments not unfit to be the secluded abode of a lovely woman. The walls were hung with gorgeous curtains, which imparted the combination of grandeur and grace that no other species of adornment can achieve; and, as they fell from the ceiling to the floor, their rich and ponderous folds, concealing all angles and straight lines, appeared to shut in the scene from infinite space. For aught Georgiana knew, it might be a pavilion among the clouds. And Aylmer, excluding the sunshine, which would have interfered with his chemical processes, had supplied its place with perfumed lamps, emitting flames of various hue, but all uniting in a soft, empurpled radiance. He now knelt by his wife's side, watching her earnestly, but without alarm; for he was confident in his science, and felt that he could draw a magic circle round her within which no evil might intrude.

"Where am I? Ah, I remember," said Georgiana, faintly; and she placed her hand over her cheek to hide the terrible mark from her husband's eyes.

"Fear not, dearest!" exclaimed he. "Do not shrink from

me! Believe me, Georgiana, I even rejoice in this single imperfection, since it will be such a rapture to remove it."

"O spare me!" sadly replied his wife. "Pray do not look at it again. I never can forget that convulsive shudder."

In order to soothe Georgiana, and, as it were, to release her mind from the burden of actual things, Aylmer now put in practice some of the light and playful secrets which science had taught him among its profounder lore. Airy figures, absolutely bodiless ideas, and forms of unsubstantial beauty came and danced before her, imprinting their momentary footsteps on beams of light. Though she had some indistinct idea of the method of these optical phenomena, still the illusion was almost perfect enough to warrant the belief that her husband possessed sway over the spiritual world. Then again, when she felt a wish to look forth from her seclusion, immediately, as if her thoughts were answered, the procession of external existence flitted across a screen. The scenery and the figures of actual life were perfectly represented but with that bewitching yet indescribable difference which always makes a picture, an image, or a shadow so much more attractive than the original. When wearied of this, Aylmer bade her cast her eyes upon a vessel containing a quantity of earth. She did so, with little interest at first; but was soon startled to perceive the germ of a plant shooting upward from the soil. Then came the slender stalk; the leaves gradually unfolded themselves; and amid them was a perfect and lovely flower.

"It is magical!" cried Georgiana. "I dare not touch it."

"Nay, pluck it," answered Aylmer—"pluck it, and inhale its brief perfume while you may. The flower will wither in a few moments and leave nothing save its brown seed-vessels; but thence may be perpetuated a race as ephemeral as itself."

But Georgiana had no sooner touched the flower than the whole plant suffered a blight, its leaves turning coal-black as if by the agency of fire.

"There was too powerful a stimulus," said Aylmer, thoughtfully.

To make up for this abortive experiment, he proposed to take her portrait by a scientific process of his own invention. It was to be effected by rays of light striking upon a polished plate of metal. Georgiana assented; but, on looking at the

ésult, was affrighted to find the features of the portrait lurred and indefinable; while the minute figure of a hand ppeared where the cheek should have been. Aylmer ıatched the metallic plate and threw it into a jar of cor-ɔsive acid.

Soon, however, he forgot these mortifying failures. In ıe intervals of study and chemical experiment he came to ɛr flushed and exhausted, but seemed invigorated by her ɾesence, and spoke in glowing language of the resources of ıs art. He gave a history of the long dynasty of the alche-ıists, who spent so many ages in quest of the universal sol-ɛnt by which the golden principle might be elicited from all ıings vile and base. Aylmer appeared to believe that, by the lainest scientific logic, it was altogether within the limits of ɔssibility to discover this long-sought medium. "But," he ıdded, "a philosopher who should go deep enough to acquire ıe power would attain too lofty a wisdom to stoop to the ɤercise of it." Not less singular were his opinions in regard ɔ the elixir vitæ. He more than intimated that it was at his ption to concoct a liquid that should prolong life for years, erhaps interminably; but that it would produce a discord in ature which all the world, and chiefly the quaffer of the nmortal nostrum, would find cause to curse.

"Aylmer, are you in earnest?" asked Georgiana, look-ıg at him with amazement and fear. "It is terrible to ossess such power, or even to dream of possessing it."

"O, do not tremble, my love," said her husband. "I ɾould not wrong either you or myself by working such in-armonious effects upon our lives; but I would have you onsider how trifling, in comparison, is the skill requisite to emove this little hand."

At the mention of the birthmark, Georgiana, as usual, hrank as if a red-hot iron had touched her cheek.

Again Aylmer applied himself to his labours. She could ear his voice in the distant furnace-room giving directions ɔ Aminadab, whose harsh, uncouth, misshapen tones were udible in response, more like the grunt or growl of a brute ıan human speech. After hours of absence, Aylmer reap-eared and proposed that she should now examine his cab-ıet of chemical products and natural treasures of the earth. ımong the former he showed her a small vial, in which, he

remarked, was contained a gentle yet most powerful fragrance, capable of impregnating all the breezes that blow across a kingdom. They were of inestimable value, the contents of that little vial; and, as he said so, he threw some of the perfume into the air and filled the room with piercing and invigorating delight.

"And what is this?" asked Georgiana, pointing to a small crystal globe containing a gold-coloured liquid. "It is so beautiful to the eye that I could imagine it the elixir of life."

"In one sense it is," replied Aylmer; "or rather, the elixir of immortality. It is the most precious poison that ever was concocted in this world. By its aid I could apportion the lifetime of any mortal at whom you might point your finger. The strength of the dose would determine whether he were to linger out years, or drop dead in the midst of a breath. No king on his guarded throne could keep his life if I, in my private station, should deem that the welfare of millions justified me in depriving him of it."

"Why do you keep such a terrific drug?" inquired Georgiana, in horror.

"Do not mistrust me, dearest," said her husband, smiling; "its virtuous potency is yet greater than its harmful one. But see! here is a powerful cosmetic. With a few drops of this in a vase of water, freckles may be washed away as easily as the hands are cleansed. A stronger infusion would take the blood out of the cheek, and leave the rosiest beauty a pale ghost."

"Is it with this lotion that you intend to bathe my cheek?" asked Georgiana, anxiously.

"O, no," hastily replied her husband; "this is merely superficial. Your case demands a remedy that shall go deeper."

In his interviews with Georgiana, Aylmer generally made minute inquiries as to her sensations, and whether the confinement of the rooms and the temperature of the atmosphere agreed with her. These questions had such a particular drift that Georgiana began to conjecture that she was already subjected to certain physical influences, either breathed in with the fragrant air or taken with her food. She fancied likewise, but it might be altogether fancy, that there was a stirring up of her system—a strange, indefinite sensation creeping through her veins, and tingling, half painfully, half

pleasurably, at her heart. Still, whenever she dared to look into the mirror, there she beheld herself pale as a white rose and with the crimson birthmark stamped upon her cheek. Not even Aylmer now hated it so much as she.

To dispel the tedium of the hours which her husband found it necessary to devote to the processes of combination and analysis, Georgiana turned over the volumes of his scientific library. In many dark old tomes she met with chapters full of romance and poetry. They were the works of the philosophers of the Middle Ages, such as Albertus Magnus, Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and the famous friar who created the prophetic Brazen Head. All these antique naturalists stood in advance of their centuries, yet were imbued with some of their credulity, and therefore were believed, and perhaps imagined themselves to have acquired from the investigation of nature a power above nature, and from physics a sway over the spiritual world. Hardly less curious and imaginative were the early volumes of the Transactions of the Royal Society, in which the members, knowing little of the limits of natural possibility, were continually recording wonders or proposing methods whereby wonders might be wrought.

But, to Georgiana, the most engrossing volume was a large folio from her husband's own hand, in which he had recorded every experiment of his scientific career, its original aim, the methods adopted for its development, and its final success or failure, with the circumstances to which either event was attributable. The book, in truth, was both the history and emblem of his ardent, ambitious, imaginative, yet practical and laborious life. He handled physical details as if there were nothing beyond them; yet spiritualised them all, and redeemed himself from materialism by his strong and eager aspiration towards the infinite. In his grasp the veriest clod of earth assumed a soul. Georgiana, as she read, reverenced Aylmer and loved him more profoundly than ever, but with a less entire dependence on his judgment than heretofore. Much as he had accomplished, she could not but observe that his most splendid successes were almost invariably failures, if compared with the ideal at which he aimed. His brightest diamonds were the merest pebbles, and felt to be so by himself, in comparison with the inestimable gems which lay

hidden beyond his reach. The volume, rich with achievements that had won renown for its author, was yet as melancholy a record as ever mortal hand had penned. It was the sad confession and continual exemplification of the shortcomings of the composite man, the spirit burdened with clay and working in matter, and of the despair that assails the higher nature at finding itself so miserably thwarted by the earthly part. Perhaps every man of genius, in whatever sphere, might recognise the image of his own experience in Aylmer's journal.

So deeply did these reflections affect Georgiana that she laid her face upon the open volume and burst into tears. In this situation she was found by her husband.

"It is dangerous to read in a sorcerer's books," said he with a smile, though his countenance was uneasy and displeased. "Georgiana, there are pages in that volume which I can scarcely glance over and keep my senses. Take heed lest it prove as detrimental to you."

"It has made me worship you more than ever," said she.

"Ah, wait for this one success," rejoined he, "then worship me if you will. I shall deem myself hardly unworthy of it. But come, I have sought you for the luxury of your voice. Sing to me, dearest."

So she poured out the liquid music of her voice to quench the thirst of his spirit. He then took his leave with a boyish exuberance of gaiety, assuring her that her seclusion would endure but a little longer, and that the result was already certain. Scarcely had he departed when Georgiana felt irresistibly impelled to follow him. She had forgotten to inform Aylmer of a symptom which for two or three hours past had begun to excite her attention. It was a sensation in the fatal birthmark, not painful, but which induced a restlessness throughout her system. Hastening after her husband, she intruded for the first time into the laboratory.

The first thing that struck her eye was the furnace, that hot and feverish worker, with the intense glow of its fire, which by the quantities of soot clustered above it seemed to have been burning for ages. There was a distilling-apparatus in full operation. Around the room were retorts, tubes, cylinders, crucibles, and other apparatus of chemical research. An electrical machine stood ready for immediate use. The

atmosphere felt oppressively close, and was tainted with gaseous odours which had been tormented forth by the processes of science. The severe and homely simplicity of the apartment, with its naked walls and brick pavement, looked strange, accustomed as Georgiana had become to the fantastic elegance of her boudoir. But what chiefly, indeed almost solely, drew her attention was the aspect of Aylmer himself.

He was pale as death, anxious and absorbed, and hung over the furnace as if it depended upon his utmost watchfulness whether the liquid which it was distilling should be the draught of immortal happiness or misery. How different from the sanguine and joyous mien that he had assumed for Georgiana's encouragement!

"Carefully now, Aminadab; carefully, thou human machine; carefully, thou man of clay," muttered Aylmer, more to himself than his assistant. "Now, if there be a thought too much or too little, it is all over."

"Ho! ho!" mumbled Aminadab. "Look, master! look!"

Aylmer raised his eyes hastily, and at first reddened, then grew paler than ever, on beholding Georgiana. He rushed towards her and seized her arm with a gripe that left the print of his fingers upon it.

"Why do you come hither? Have you no trust in your husband?" cried he, impetuously. "Would you throw the blight of that fatal birthmark over my labours? It is not well done. Go, prying woman! go!"

"Nay, Aylmer," said Georgiana, with the firmness of which she possessed no stinted endowment, "it is not you that have a right to complain. You mistrust your wife; you have concealed the anxiety with which you watch the development of this experiment. Think not so unworthily of me, my husband. Tell me all the risk we run, and fear not that I shall shrink; for my share in it is far less than your own."

"No, no, Georgiana!" said Aylmer, impatiently; "it must not be."

"I submit," replied she, calmly. "And, Aylmer, I shall quaff whatever draught you bring me; but it will be on the same principle that would induce me to take a dose of poison if offered by your hand."

"My noble wife," said Aylmer, deeply moved, "I knew not the height and depth of your nature until now. Nothing

shall be concealed. Know, then, that this crimson hand, superficial as it seems, has clutched its grasp into your being with a strength of which I had no previous conception. I have already administered agents powerful enough to do aught except to change your entire physical system. Only one thing remains to be tried. If that fail us we are ruined."

"Why did you hesitate to tell me this?" asked she.

"Because, Georgiana," said Aylmer, in a low voice, "there is danger."

"Danger? There is but one danger—that this horrible stigma shall be left upon my cheek!" cried Georgiana. "Remove it, remove it, whatever be the cost, or we shall both go mad!"

"Heaven knows your words are too true," said Aylmer, sadly. "And now, dearest, return to your boudoir. In a little while all will be tested."

He conducted her back and took leave of her with a solemn tenderness which spoke far more than his words how much was now at stake. After his departure Georgiana became rapt in musings. She considered the character of Aylmer, and did it completer justice than at any previous moment. Her heart exulted, while it trembled, at his honourable love—so pure and lofty that it would accept nothing less than perfection, nor miserably make itself contented with an earthlier nature than he had dreamed of. She felt how much more precious was such a sentiment than that meaner kind which would have borne with the imperfection for her sake, and have been guilty of treason to holy love by degrading its perfect idea to the level of the actual; and with her whole spirit she prayed that, for a single moment, she might satisfy his highest and deepest conception. Longer than one moment she well knew it could not be; for his spirit was ever on the march, ever ascending, and each instant required something that was beyond the scope of the instant before.

The sound of her husband's footsteps aroused her. He bore a crystal goblet containing a liquor colourless as water, but bright enough to be the draught of immortality. Aylmer was pale; but it seemed rather the consequence of a highly-wrought state of mind and tension of spirit than of fear or doubt.

"The concoction of the draught has been perfect," said

he, in answer to Georgiana's look. "Unless all my science have deceived me, it cannot fail."

"Save on your account, my dearest Aylmer," observed his wife, "I might wish to put off this birthmark of mortality by relinquishing mortality itself in preference to any other mode. Life is but a sad possession to those who have attained precisely the degree of moral advancement at which I stand. Were I weaker and blinder, it might be happiness. Were I stronger, it might be endured hopefully. But, being what I find myself, methinks I am of all mortals the most fit to die."

"You are fit for heaven without tasting death!" replied her husband. "But why do we speak of dying? The draught cannot fail. Behold its effect upon this plant."

On the window-seat there stood a geranium diseased with yellow blotches, which had overspread all its leaves. Aylmer poured a small quantity of the liquid upon the soil in which it grew. In a little time, when the roots of the plant had taken up the moisture, the unsightly blotches began to be extinguished in a living verdure.

"There needed no proof," said Georgiana, quietly. "Give me the goblet. I joyfully stake all upon your word."

"Drink, then, thou lofty creature!" exclaimed Aylmer, with fervid admiration. "There is no taint of imperfection on thy spirit. Thy sensible frame, too, shall soon be all perfect."

She quaffed the liquid and returned the goblet to his hand.

"It is grateful," said she, with a placid smile. "Methinks it is like water from a heavenly fountain; for it contains I know not what of unobtrusive fragrance and deliciousness. It allays a feverish thirst that had parched me for many days. Now, dearest, let me sleep. My earthly senses are closing over my spirit like the leaves around the heart of a rose at sunset."

She spoke the last words with a gentle reluctance, as if it required almost more energy than she could command to pronounce the faint and lingering syllables. Scarcely had they loitered through her lips ere she was lost in slumber. Aylmer sat by her side, watching her aspect with the emotions proper to a man, the whole value of whose existence was involved in the process now to be tested. Mingled with this

mood, however, was the philosophic investigation characteristic of the man of science. Not the minutest symptom escaped him. A heightened flush of the cheek, a slight irregularity of breath, a quiver of the eyelid, a hardly perceptible tremor through the frame—such were the details which, as the moments passed, he wrote down in his folio volume. Intense thought had set its stamp upon every previous page of that volume; but the thoughts of years were all concentrated upon the last.

While thus employed, he failed not to gaze often at the fatal hand, and not without a shudder. Yet once, by a strange and unaccountable impulse, he pressed it with his lips. His spirit recoiled, however, in the very act; and Georgiana, out of the midst of her deep sleep, moved uneasily and murmured, as if in remonstrance. Again Aylmer resumed his watch. Nor was it without avail. The crimson hand, which at first had been strongly visible upon the marble paleness of Georgiana's cheek, now grew more faintly outlined. She remained not less pale than ever; but the birthmark, with every breath that came and went, lost somewhat of its former distinctness. Its presence had been awful; its departure was more awful still. Watch the stain of the rainbow fading out of the sky, and you will know how that mysterious symbol passed away.

"By Heaven! it is well-nigh gone!" said Aylmer to himself, in almost irrepressible ecstasy. "I can scarcely trace it now. Success! success! And now it is like the faintest rose-colour. The lightest flush of blood across her cheek would overcome it. But she is so pale!"

He drew aside the window-curtain and suffered the light of natural day to fall into the room and rest upon her cheek. At the same time he heard a gross, hoarse chuckle, which he had long known as his servant Aminadab's expression of delight.

"Ah, clod! ah, earthly mass!" cried Aylmer, laughing in a sort of frenzy, "you have served me well! Matter and spirit—earth and heaven—have both done their part in this! Laugh, thing of the senses! You have earned the right to laugh."

These exclamations broke Georgiana's sleep. She slowly unclosed her eyes and gazed into the mirror which her husband had arranged for that purpose. A faint smile flitted

over her lips when she recognised how barely perceptible was now that crimson hand which had once blazed forth with such disastrous brilliancy as to scare away all their happiness. But then her eyes sought Aylmer's face with a trouble and anxiety that he could by no means account for.

"My poor Aylmer!" murmured she.

"Poor? Nay, richest, happiest, most favoured!" exclaimed he. "My peerless bride, it is successful! You are perfect!"

"My poor Aylmer," she repeated, with a more than human tenderness, "you have aimed loftily; you have done nobly. Do not repent that, with so high and pure a feeling, you have rejected the best the earth could offer. Aylmer, dearest Aylmer, I am dying!"

Alas! it was too true! The fatal hand had grappled with the mystery of life, and was the bond by which an angelic spirit kept itself in union with a mortal frame. As the last crimson tint of the birthmark—that sole token of human imperfection—faded from her cheek, the parting breath of the now perfect woman passed into the atmosphere, and her soul, lingering a moment near her husband, took its heavenward flight. Then a hoarse, chuckling laugh was heard again! Thus ever does the gross fatality of earth exult in its invariable triumph over the immortal essence which, in this dim sphere of half-development, demands the completeness of a higher state. Yet, had Aylmer reached a profounder wisdom, he need not thus have flung away the happiness which would have woven his mortal life of the selfsame texture with the celestial. The momentary circumstance was too strong for him; he failed to look beyond the shadowy scope of time, and, living once for all in eternity, to find the perfect future in the present.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XIV

1860 TO 1870:

Contes Fantastiques, Erckmann-Chatrian (1860).
Contes de la Montagne, Erckmann-Chatrian (1860).
First Love, Ivan Turgeneff (1860).
Smaastykker, B. Björnson (1860).
Popular Tales of the West Highlands, J. F. Campbell (1860–62).
The Invaders, Lyof Tolstoy (1861).
Contes du Bord du Rhin, Erckmann-Chatrian (1862).
The Man Without a Country, Edward Everett Hale (1863).
Cousin Phillis, Mrs. Gaskell (1863–64).
Contes à Ninon, Émile Zola (1864–1874).
Contes Bleus, E. R. L. de Laboulaye (1864–1865).
Mugby Junction, Charles Dickens (1866).
Contes Populaires, Erckmann-Chatrian (1866).
The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, S. L. Clemens (1867).
The Luck of Roaring Camp, Bret Harte (1868).
Leyendas Españolas, G. A. Becquer (1868).
La Vita Militaire, Edmondo de Amicis (1868).
Les Mariages de Province, Edmond About (1868).
Mokis, Prosper Mérimée (1869).
The Outcasts of Poker Flat, Bret Harte (1869).
Lettres de mon Moulin, Alphonse Daudet (1869).

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO, by Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), was first published in the November, 1846, number of Godey's Lady's Book. Poe's first collection of Short Stories, Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, had appeared in 1840.

The Cask of Amontillado, as Edmund Clarence Stedman has said, "paints with a few strokes all that has been conceived of Roman pride and vengeance." It is a story in Poe's most characteristic manner, and unites, as perhaps no other one of his fictions does, both his chief merits and his particular defects, though the latter are by no means in the ascendant. Poe's name will doubtless be ever intimately associated with the progress of the Short Story. He was in many respects an innovator. In view of the fact that Prosper Mérimée published some of his best Short Stories in 1829, however, neither Poe nor Hawthorne can justly be called the father of the modern Short Story. Yet in that realm of Terror and Unreason which Poe made peculiarly his own, he may still be accounted the greatest if not the first. An interesting comparison may be made between Poe's The Cask of Amontillado and Balzac's La Grande Bretèche; both are based on somewhat similar situations.

Among the best of Poe's stories may be mentioned: MS. Found in a Bottle (1833), The Assignation (1835), Ligeia (1838), The Fall of the House of Usher (1839), The Murders in the Rue Morgue (1841), A Descent into the Maelstrom (1841), The Masque of the Red Death (1842), Eleonora (1842), The Pit and the Pendulum

(1843), The Gold-Bug (1843), The Black Cat (1843), The Purloined Letter (1845), and The Cask of Amontillado (1846).

AUTHORITIES:

Edgar Allan Poe, by William P. Trent (English Men of Letters series).

Edgar Allan Poe (revised edition), by George E. Woodberry (American Men of Letters series).

Introduction, by Charles Baudelaire, to his translation of Poe's works (Paris: 1856).

Life and Letters of Edgar Allan Poe, by James A. Harrison.

The Short Story in English, by Henry Seidel Canby (Chapter XI).

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitely settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good-will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practise imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skilful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting party-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him: "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met.

How remarkably well you are looking to-day! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me——"

"Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi——"

"I have no engagement—come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are encrusted with nitre."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a roquelaure closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honour of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi——"

"Enough," he said: "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mould.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are embedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The nitre!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough——"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grâve. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed, and threw the bottle upward with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement —a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said, "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my roquelaure.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi——"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let

me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building-stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labours and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the masonwork, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamoured. I reëchoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamourer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XV

1870 TO 1880:

Lear of the Steppes, Ivan Turgeneff (1870).
arlino, G. D. Ruffini (1870).
he Torrents of Spring, Ivan Turgeneff (1871)
evil-Puzzlers, Frederic B. Perkins (1871).
ur Brown Passenger, Henry Kingsley (1871).
a Glass Darkly, J. Sheridan Le Fanu (1872).
rzählungen und Novellen, R. Lindau (1873).
ernières Nouvelles, Prosper Mérimée (1873).
ontes du Lundi, Alphonse Daudet (1873).
arjorie Daw, Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1873).
Vho Was She?, Bayard Taylor (1874).
ie Leute von Seldwyla, Gottfried Keller (1874).
es Femmes d'Artistes, Alphonse Daudet (1874).
Passionate Pilgrim, and Other Stories, Henry James (1875).
ales of the Argonauts, Bret Harte (1875).
es Morts Bizarres, Jean Richepin (1876).
he Dream, Ivan Turgeneff (1876).
he House on the Beach, George Meredith (1877).
es Folies Amoureuses, Catulle Mendès (1877).
Lodging for the Night, R. L. Stevenson (1877).
astorals of France, Frederick Wedmore (1877).
rois Contes, Gustave Flaubert (1877).
he Case of General Ople and Lady Camper, George Meredith (1877).
udengeschichten, L. von Sacher-Masoch (1878).
he Sire de Malétroit's Door, R. L. Stevenson (1878).
ew Arabian Nights, R. L. Stevenson (1878).
Vill o' the Mill, R. L. Stevenson (1878).
üricher Novellen, Gottfried Keller (1878).
tories, V. M. Garshin (1878–).
Noveletter, Alexander L. Kielland (1879).
The Madonna of the Future, and Other Stories, Henry James (1879).
Old Creole Days, G. W. Cable (1879–83).

A LEAR OF THE STEPPES

A LEAR OF THE STEPPES, written by Ivan Turgeneff (1818–1883) in 1870, was first published in the same year. The list of Turgeneff's Short Stories is too long to give in entirety, but a few of the most striking may be mentioned: The Jew (1846), The Diary of a Superfluous Man (1850), Three Meetings (1851), Mumu (1852), A Correspondence (1854), Faust (1855), Assya (1857), First Love (1860), Visions (1863), The Dog (1866), A Lear of the Steppes (1870), The Torrents of Spring (1871), The Dream (1876), and After Death (1883).

Of Turgeneff's Short Stories Henry James has said: "One by one, for thirty years, with a firm, deliberate hand, with intervals and patiences and waits, Turgeneff pricked in his sharp outlines. His great external mark is probably his concision: an ideal he never threw over—it shines most perhaps even when he is least brief—and that he often applied with a rare felicity. He has masterpieces of a few pages; his perfect things are sometimes his least prolonged. He abounds in short tales, episodes clipped as if by the scissors of Atropos." An examination of A Lear of the Steppes will show wherein it is Turgeneff's particular fortune to excel. As Edward Garnett has said: "This sense of inevitability and of the mystery of life that Turgeneff gives us in A Lear of the Steppes is the highest demand we can make from art." The story is a supreme example of Turgeneff's imaginative interpretation of life, and of his habit of representing the universal in a single character.

The present version of A Lear of the Steppes is that by Constance Garnett.

AUTHORITIES:

Partial Portraits, by Henry James; French Poets and Novelists, by Henry James.

Introductions, by Edward Garnett, to the volumes of the edition of Turgeneff's works translated by Constance Garnett.

A History of Russian Literature, by K. Waliszewski (Literatures of the World series).

Essays on Russian Novelists, by William Lyon Phelps.

A LEAR OF THE STEPPES

We were a party of six, gathered together one winter evening at the house of an old college friend. The conversation turned on Shakespeare, on his types, and how profoundly and truly they were taken from the very heart of humanity. We admired particularly their truth to life, their actuality. Each of us spoke of the Hamlets, the Othellos, the Falstaffs, even the Richard the Thirds and Macbeths—the last two only potentially, it is true, resembling their prototypes—whom he had happened to come across.

"And I, gentlemen," cried our host, a man well past middle age, "used to know a King Lear!"

"How was that?" we questioned him.

"Oh, would you like me to tell you about him?"

"Please do."

And our friend promptly began his narrative.

I

"All my childhood," he began, "and early youth, up to the age of fifteen, I spent in the country, on the estate of my mother, a wealthy landowner in X—— province. Almost the most vivid impression, that has remained in my memory of that far-off time, is the figure of our nearest neighbour, Martin Petrovitch Harlov. Indeed it would be difficult for such an impression to be obliterated: I never in my life afterwards met anything in the least like Harlov. Picture to yourselves a man of gigantic stature. On his huge carcass was set, a little askew, and without the least trace of a neck, a prodigious head. A perfect haystack of tangled yellowish-gray hair stood up all over it, growing almost down to the bushy eyebrows. On the broad expanse of his purple face, that looked as though it had been peeled, there protruded a sturdy knobby

nose; diminutive little blue eyes stared out haughtily, and a mouth gaped open that was diminutive too, but crooked, chapped, and of the same colour as the rest of the face. The voice that proceeded from this mouth, though hoarse, was exceedingly strong and resonant. . . . Its sound recalled the clank of iron bars, carried in a cart over a badly paved road; and when Harlov spoke, it was as though some one were shouting in a high wind across a wide ravine. It was difficult to tell just what Harlov's face expressed, it was such an expanse. . . . One felt one could hardly take it all in at one glance. But it was not disagreeable—a certain grandeur indeed could be discerned in it, only it was exceedingly astounding and unusual. And what hands he had—positive cushions! What fingers, what feet! I remember I could never gaze without a certain respectful awe at the four-foot span of Martin Petrovitch's back, at his shoulders, like millstones. But what especially struck me was his ears! They were just like great twists of bread, full of bends and curves; his cheeks seemed to support them on both sides. Martin Petrovitch used to wear—winter and summer alike—a Cossack dress of green cloth, girt about with a small Tcherkess strap, and tarred boots. I never saw a cravat on him, and indeed what could he have tied a cravat round? He breathed slowly and heavily, like a bull, but walked without a sound. One might have imagined that having got into a room, he was in constant fear of upsetting and overturning everything, and so moved cautiously from place to place, sideways for the most part, as though slinking by. He was possessed of a strength truly Herculean, and in consequence enjoyed great renown in the neighbourhood. Our common people retain to this day their reverence for Titanic heroes. Legends were invented about him. They used to recount that he had one day met a bear in the forest and had almost vanquished him; that having once caught a thief in the beehouse, he had flung him, horse and cart and all, over the hedge, and so on. Harlov himself never boasted of his strength. "If my right hand is blessed," he used to say, "so it is God's will it should be!" He was proud, only he did not take pride in his strength, but in his rank, his descent, his common sense.

"Our family's descended from the Swede Harlus," he used to maintain. "In the princely reign of Ivan Vassilievitch the

Dark (fancy how long ago!) he came to Russia, and that Swede Harlus did not wish to be a Finnish count—but he wished to be a Russian nobleman, and he was inscribed in the golden book. It's from him we Harlovs are sprung! . . . And by the same token, all of us Harlovs are born flaxen-haired, with light eyes and clean faces, because we're children of the snow!"

"But, Martin Petrovitch," I once tried to object, "there never was an Ivan Vassilievitch the Dark. There was an Ivan Vassilievitch the Terrible. The Dark was the name given to the great prince Vassily Vassilievitch."

"What nonsense will you talk next!" Harlov answered serenely; "since I say so, so it was!"

One day my mother took it into her head to commend him to his face for his really remarkable incorruptibility.

"Ah, Natalia Nikolaevna!" he protested almost angrily; "what a thing to praise me for, really! We gentlefolk can't be otherwise; so that no churl, no low-born, servile creature dare even imagine evil of us! I am a Harlov, my family has come down from"—here he pointed up somewhere very high aloft in the ceiling—"and me not be honest! How is it possible?"

Another time a high official, who had come into the neighbourhood and was staying with my mother, fancied he could make fun of Martin Petrovitch. The latter had again referred to the Swede Harlus, who came to Russia. . . .

"In the days of King Solomon?" the official interrupted.

"No, not of King Solomon, but of the great Prince Ivan Vassilievitch the Dark."

"But I imagine," the official pursued, "that your family is much more ancient, and goes back to antediluvian days, when there were still mastodons and megatheriums about."

These scientific names were absolutely meaningless to Martin Petrovitch; but he realised that the dignitary was laughing at him.

"May be so," he boomed, "our family is, no doubt, very ancient; in those days when my ancestor was in Moscow, they do say there was as great a fool as your excellency living there, and such fools are not seen twice in a thousand years."

The high official was in a furious rage, while Harlov

threw his head back, stuck out his chin, snorted and disappeared. Two days later he came in again. My mother began reproaching him. "It's a lesson for him, ma'am," interposed Harlov, "not to fly off without knowing what he's about, to find out whom he has to deal with first. He's young yet, he must be taught." The dignitary was almost of the same age as Harlov; but this Titan was in the habit of regarding every one as not fully grown up. He had the greatest confidence in himself and was afraid of absolutely no one. "Can they do anything to me? Where on earth is the man that can?" he would ask, and suddenly he would go off into a short but deafening guffaw.

II

My mother was exceedingly particular in her choice of acquaintances, but she made Harlov welcome with special cordiality and allowed him many privileges. Twenty-five years before, he had saved her life by holding up her carriage on the edge of a deep precipice, down which the horses had already fallen. The traces and straps of the harness broke, but Martin Petrovitch did not let go his hold of the wheel he had grasped, though the blood spurted out under his nails. My mother had arranged his marriage. She chose for his wife an orphan girl of seventeen, who had been brought up in her house; he was over forty at the time. Martin Petrovitch's wife was a frail creature—they said he carried her into his house in the palms of his hands—and she did not live long with him. She bore him two daughters, however. After her death, my mother continued her good offices to Martin Petrovitch. She placed his elder daughter in the district school, and afterwards found her a husband, and already had another in her eye for the second. Harlov was a fairly good manager. He had a little estate of nearly eight hundred acres, and had built on to his place a little, and the way the peasants obeyed him is indescribable. Owing to his stoutness, Harlov scarcely ever went anywhere on foot: the earth did not bear him. He used to go everywhere in a low racing droshky, himself driving a raw-boned mare, thirty years old, with a scar on her shoulder, from a wound which she had received in the battle of Borodino, under the quarter-

master of a cavalry regiment. This mare was always somehow lame in all four legs; she could not go at a walking pace, but could only change from a trot to a canter. She used to eat mugwort and wormwood along the hedges, which I have never noticed any other horse do. I remember I always used to wonder how such a broken-down nag could draw such a fearful weight. I won't venture to repeat how many hundredweight were attributed to our neighbour. In the droshky behind Martin Petrovitch's back perched his swarthy page, Maximka. With his face and whole person squeezed close up to his master, and his bare feet propped on the hind axle-bar of the droshky, he looked like a little leaf or worm which had clung by chance to the gigantic carcass before him. This same page boy used once a week to shave Martin Petrovitch. He used, so they said, to stand on a table to perform this operation. Some jocose persons averred that he had to run round his master's chin. Harlov did not like staying long at home, and so one might often see him driving about in his invariable equipage, with the reins in one hand (the other he held smartly on his knee with the elbow crooked upwards), with a diminutive old cap on the very top of his head. He looked boldly about him with his little bearlike eyes, shouted in a voice of thunder to all the peasants, artisans, and tradespeople he met. Priests he greatly disliked, and he would send vigorous abjurations after them when he met them. One day on overtaking me (I was out for a stroll with my gun), he hallooed at a hare that lay near the road in such a way that I could not get the roar and ring of it out of my ears all day.

III

My mother, as I have already stated, made Martin Petrovitch very welcome. She knew what a profound respect he entertained for her person. "She is a real gentlewoman, one of our sort," was the way he used to refer to her. He used to style her his benefactress, while she saw in him a devoted giant, who would not have hesitated to face a whole mob of peasants in defence of her; and although no one foresaw the barest possibility of such a contingency, still, to my mother's notions, in the absence of a husband—she had early been left a widow—such a champion as Martin Petrovitch was not to

be despised. And besides, he was a man of upright character, who curried favour with no one, never borrowed money or drank spirits; and no fool either, though he had received no sort of education. My mother trusted Martin Petrovitch; when she took it into her head to make her will, she asked him to witness it, and he drove home expressly to fetch his round iron-rimmed spectacles, without which he could not write. And with spectacles on nose, he succeeded, in a quarter of an hour, with many gasps and groans and great effort, in inscribing his Christian name, father's name, and surname and his rank and designation, tracing enormous quadrangular letters, with tails and flourishes. Having completed this task, he declared he was tired out, and that writing for him was as hard work as catching fleas. Yes, my mother had a respect for him; . . . he was not, however, admitted beyond the dining-room in our house. He carried a very strong odour with him; there was a smell of the earth, of decaying forest, of marsh mud about him. "He's a forest demon!" my old nurse would declare. At dinner a special table used to be laid apart in a corner for Martin Petrovitch, and he was not offended at that, he knew other people were ill at ease sitting beside him, and he too had greater freedom in eating. And he did eat too, as no one, I imagine, has eaten since the days of Polyphemus. At the very beginning of dinner, by way of a precautionary measure, they always served him a pot of some four pounds of porridge, "else you'd eat me out of house and home," my mother used to say. "That I should, ma'am," Martin Petrovitch would respond, grinning.

My mother liked to hear his reflections on any topic connected with the land. But she could not support the sound of his voice for long together. "What's the meaning of it, my good sir!" she would exclaim; "you might take something to cure yourself of it, really! You simply deafen me. Such a trumpet-blast!"

"Natalia Nikolaevna! benefactress!" Martin Petrovitch would rejoin, as a rule, "I'm not responsible for my throat. And what medicine could have any effect on me—kindly tell me that? I'd better hold my tongue for a bit."

In reality, I imagine, no medicine could have affected Martin Petrovitch. He was never ill.

He was not good at telling stories, and did not care for it.

"Much talking gives me asthma," he used to remark reproachfully. It was only when one got him on to the year 1812—he had served in the militia, and had received a bronze medal, which he used to wear on festive occasions attached to a Vladimir ribbon—when one questioned him about the French, that he would relate some few anecdotes. He used, however, to maintain stoutly all the while that there never had been any Frenchmen, real ones, in Russia, only some poor marauders, who had straggled over from hunger, and that he had given many a good drubbing to such rabble in the forests.

IV

And yet even this self-confident, unflinching giant had his moments of melancholy and depression. Without any visible cause he would suddenly begin to be sad; he would lock himself up alone in his room, and hum—positively hum—like a whole hive of bees; or he would call his page Maximka, and tell him to read aloud to him out of the solitary book which had somehow found its way into his house, an odd volume of Novikovsky's The Worker at Leisure, or else to sing to him. And Maximka, who by some strange freak of chance could spell out print, syllable by syllable, would set to work with the usual chopping up of the words and transference of the accent, bawling out phrases of the following description: "But man in his wilfulness draws from this empty hypothesis, which he applies to the animal kingdom, utterly opposite conclusions. Every animal separately," he says, "is not capable of making me happy!" and so on. Or he would chant in a shrill little voice a mournful song, of which nothing could be distinguished but: "Ee . . . eee . . . ee . . . a . . . ee . . . a . . . ee . . . Aaa . . . ska! O . . . oo . . . oo . . . bee . . . ee . . . ee . . . ee . . . la!" While Martin Petrovitch would shake his head, make allusions to the mutability of life, how all things turn to ashes, fade away like grass, pass—and will return no more! A picture had somehow come into his hands, representing a burning candle, which the winds, with puffed-out cheeks, were blowing upon from all sides; below was the inscription: "Such is the life of man." He was very fond of this picture; he had hung it up in his own room, but at ordinary, not melancholy, times he used to keep it turned face to the wall, so that it might not depress him. Harlov,

that colossus, was afraid of death! To the consolations of religion, to prayer, however, he rarely had recourse in his fits of melancholy. Even then he chiefly relied on his own intelligence. He had no particular religious feeling; he was not often seen in church; he used to say, it is true, that he did not go on the ground that, owing to his corporeal dimensions, he was afraid of squeezing other people out. The fit of depression commonly ended in Martin Petrovitch's beginning to whistle, and suddenly, in a voice of thunder, ordering out his droshky, and dashing off about the neighbourhood, vigorously brandishing his disengaged hand over the peak of his cap, as though he would say, "For all that, I don't care a straw!" He was a regular Russian.

V

Strong men, like Martin Petrovitch, are for the most part of a phlegmatic disposition; but he, on the contrary, was rather easily irritated. He was specially short-tempered with a certain Bitchkov, who had found a refuge in our house, where he occupied a position between that of a buffoon and a dependent. He was the brother of Harlov's deceased wife. had been nicknamed Souvenir as a little boy, and Souvenir he had remained for every one, even the servants, who addressed him, it is true, as Souvenir Timofeitch. His real name he seemed hardly to know himself. He was a pitiful creature, looked down upon by every one; a toady, in fact. He had no teeth on one side of his mouth, which gave his little wrinkled face a crooked appearance. He was in a perpetual fuss and fidget; he used to poke himself into the maids' room, or into the counting-house, or into the priest's quarters, or else into the bailiff's hut. He was repelled from everywhere, but he only shrugged himself up, and screwed up his little eyes, and laughed a pitiful mawkish laugh, like the sound of rinsing a bottle. It always seemed to me that had Souvenir had money, he would have turned into the basest person, unprincipled, spiteful, even cruel. Poverty kept him within bounds. He was only allowed drink on holidays. He was decently dressed, by my mother's orders, since in the evenings he took a hand in her game of picquet or boston. Souvenir was constantly repeating: "Certainly, d'rectly,

d'rectly." "D'rectly what?" my mother would ask, with annoyance. He instantly drew back his hands, in a scare, and lisped: "At your service, ma'am!" Listening at doors, backbiting, and, above all, quizzing, teasing, were his sole interest, and he used to quiz as though he had a right to, as though he were avenging himself for something. He used to call Martin Petrovitch brother, and tormented him beyond endurance. "What made you kill my sister, Margarita Timofeevna?" he used to persist, wriggling about before him and sniggering. One day Martin Petrovitch was sitting in the billiard-room, a cool apartment, in which no one had ever seen a single fly, and which our neighbour, disliking heat and sunshine, greatly favoured on this account. He was sitting between the wall and the billiard-table. Souvenir was fidgeting before his bulky person, mocking him, grimacing. . . . Martin Petrovitch wanted to get rid of him, and thrust both hands out in front of him. Luckily for Souvenir he managed to get away, his brother-in-law's open hands came into collision with the edge of the billiard-table, and the billiard-board went flying off all its six screws. . . . What a mass of batter Souvenir would have been turned into under those mighty hands!

VI

I had long been curious to see how Martin Petrovitch arranged his household, what sort of a home he had. One day I invited myself to accompany him on horseback as far as Eskovo (that was the name of his estate). "Upon my word, you want to have a look at my dominion," was Martin Petrovitch's comment. "By all means! I'll show you the garden, and the house, and the threshing-floor, and everything. I have plenty of everything." We set off. It was reckoned hardly more than a couple of miles from our place to Eskovo. "Here it is—my dominion!" Martin Petrovitch roared suddenly, trying to turn his immovable neck, and waving his arm to right and left. "It's all mine!" Harlov's homestead lay on the top of a sloping hill. At the bottom, a few wretched-looking peasants' huts clustered close to a small pond. At the pond, on a washing-platform, an old peasant woman in a check petticoat was beating some soaked linen with a bat.

"Axinia!" boomed Martin Petrovitch, but in such a note that the rooks flew up in a flock from an oat-field near. . . . "Washing your husband's breeches?"

The peasant woman turned at once and bowed very low.

"Yes, sir," sounded her weak voice.

"Ay, ay! Yonder, look," Martin Petrovitch continued, proceeding at a trot alongside a half-rotting wattle fence, "that is my hemp-patch; and that yonder's the peasants'; see the difference? And this here is my garden; the apple-trees I planted, and the willows I planted too. Else there was no timber of any sort here. Look at that, and learn a lesson!"

We turned into the courtyard, shut in by a fence; right opposite the gate rose an old tumble-down lodge, with a thatch roof, and steps up to it, raised on posts. On one side stood another, rather newer, and with a tiny attic; but it too was a ramshackly affair. "Here you may learn a lesson again," observed Harlov; "see what a little manor-house our fathers lived in; but now see what a mansion I have built myself." This "mansion" was like a house of cards. Five or six dogs, one more ragged and hideous than another, welcomed us with barking. "Sheep-dogs!" observed Martin Petrovitch. "Pure-bred Crimeans! Sh, damned brutes! I'll come and strangle you one after another!" On the steps of the new building there came out a young man, in a long full nankeen overall, the husband of Martin Petrovitch's elder daughter. Skipping quickly up to the droshky, he respectfully supported his father-in-law under the elbow as he got up, and even made as though he would hold the gigantic feet, which the latter, bending his bulky person forward, lifted with a sweeping movement across the seat; then he assisted me to dismount from my horse.

"Anna!" cried Harlov, "Natalia Nikolaevna's son has come to pay us a visit; you must find some good cheer for him. But where's Evlampia?" (Anna was the name of the elder daughter, Evlampia of the younger.)

"She's not at home; she's gone into the fields to get corn-flowers," responded Anna, appearing at a little window near the door.

"Is there any junket?" queried Harlov.

"Yes."

"And cream too?"

"Yes."

"Well, set them on the table, and I'll show the young gentleman my own room meanwhile.—This way, please, this way," he added, addressing me, and beckoning with his forefinger. In his own house he treated me less familiarly; as a host he felt obliged to be more formally respectful. He led me along a corridor. "Here is where I abide," he observed, stepping sideways over the threshold of a wide doorway, "this is my room. Pray walk in!"

His room turned out to be a big unplastered apartment, almost empty; on the walls, on nails driven in askew, hung two riding-whips, a three-cornered hat reddish with wear, a single-barrelled gun, a sabre, a sort of curious horse-collar inlaid with metal plates, and the picture representing a burning candle blown on by the winds. In one corner stood a wooden settle covered with a party-coloured rug. Hundreds of flies swarmed thickly about the ceiling; yet the room was cool. But there was a very strong smell of that peculiar odour of the forest which always accompanied Martin Petrovitch.

"Well, is it a nice room?" Harlov questioned me.

"Very nice."

"Look-ye, there hangs my Dutch horse-collar," Harlov went on, dropping into his familiar tone again. "A splendid horse-collar! got it by barter off a Jew. Just you look at it!"

"It's a good horse-collar."

"It's most practical. And just sniff it . . . what leather!" I smelt the horse-collar. It smelt of rancid oil and nothing else.

"Now, be seated—there on the stool; make yourself at home," observed Harlov, while he himself sank on to the settle, and seemed to fall into a doze, shutting his eyes and even beginning to snore. I gazed at him without speaking, with ever fresh wonder; he was a perfect mountain—there was no other word! Suddenly he started.

"Anna!" he shouted, while his huge stomach rose and fell like a wave on the sea; "what are you about? Look sharp! Didn't you hear me?"

"Everything's ready, father; come in," I heard his daughter's voice.

I inwardly marvelled at the rapidity with which Martin

Petrovitch's behests had been carried out; and followe into the drawing-room, where, on a table covered with cloth with white flowers on it, lunch was already prep junket, cream, wheaten bread, even powdered sugar ginger. While I set to work on the junket, Martin I vitch growled affectionately: "Eat, my friend, eat, my boy; don't despise our country cheer," and sitting down in a corner, again seemed to fall into a doze. Befor perfectly motionless, with downcast eyes, stood Anna M ovna, while I saw through the window her husband wa my cob up and down the yard, and rubbing the chain c snaffle with his own hands.

VII

My mother did not like Harlov's elder daughter called her a stuck-up thing. Anna Martinovna scarcely came to pay us her respects, and behaved with chilly dec in my mother's presence, though it was by her good c she had been well educated at a boarding-school, and had married, and on her wedding-day had received a thou rubles and a yellow Turkish shawl; the latter, it is a trifle the worse for wear. She was a woman of me height, thin, very brisk and rapid in her movements, with fair hair and a handsome dark face, on which the pale narrow eyes showed up in a rather strange but ple way. She had a straight thin nose, her lips were thin toc her chin was like the loop-end of a hairpin. No one lo at her could fail to think: "Well, you are a clever creat and a spiteful one, too!" And for all that, there was s thing attractive about her too. Even the dark moles, scat "like buckwheat" over her face, suited her and increase feeling she inspired. Her hands thrust into her kerchie was slyly watching me, looking downwards (I was s while she was standing). A wicked little smile strayed her lips and her cheeks and in the shadow of her long lashes. "Ugh, you pampered little fine gentleman!" smile seemed to express. Every time she drew a breath nostrils slightly distended—this, too, was rather strange. all the same, it seemed to me that were Anna Martir to love me, or even to care to kiss me with her thin crue I should simply bound up to the ceiling with delight. I

was very severe and exacting, that the peasant women girls went in terror of her—but what of that? Anna artinovna secretly excited my imagination . . . though fter all, I was only fifteen then—and at that age! . . .

Martin Petrovitch roused himself again. "Anna!" he uted, "you ought to strum something on the pianoforte . . . young gentlemen are fond of that."

I looked round; there was a pitiful semblance of a piano in the room.

"Yes, father," responded Anna Martinovna. "Only what am I to play the young gentleman? He won't find it interesting."

"Why, what did they teach you at your young ladies' seminary?"

"I've forgotten everything—besides, the notes are broken."

Anna Martinovna's voice was very pleasant, resonant, and rather plaintive—like the note of some birds of prey.

"Very well," said Martin Petrovitch, and he lapsed into dreaminess again. "Well," he began once more, "wouldn't you like, then, to see the threshing-floor, and take a look round? Volodka will escort you.—Hi, Volodka!" he shouted to his son-in-law, who was still pacing up and down the yard with my horse, "take the young gentleman to the threshing-floor . . . and show him my farming generally. But I must have a nap! So! good-by!"

He went out and I after him. Anna Martinovna at once set to work rapidly, and, as it were, angrily, clearing the table. In the doorway, I turned and bowed to her. But she seemed not to notice my bow, and only smiled again, more maliciously than before.

I took my horse from Harlov's son-in-law and led him by the bridle. We went together to the threshing-floor, but as we discovered nothing very remarkable about it, and as he could not suppose any great interest in farming in a young lad like me, we returned through the garden to the main road.

VIII

I was well acquainted with Harlov's son-in-law. His name was Vladimir Vassilievitch Sletkin. He was an orphan,

brought up by my mother, and the son of a petty official, to whom she had intrusted some business. He had first been placed in the district school, then he had entered the "seignorial counting-house," then he had been put into the service of the government stores, and, finally, married to the daughter of Martin Petrovitch. My mother used to call him a little Jew; and certainly, with his curly hair, his black eyes always moist, like damson jam, his hook nose, and wide red mouth, he did suggest the Jewish type. But the colour of his skin was white and he was altogether very good-looking. He was of a most obliging temper, so long as his personal advantage was not involved. Then he promptly lost all self-control from greediness, and was moved even to tears. He was ready to whine the whole day long to gain the paltriest trifle; he would remind one a hundred times over of a promise, and be hurt and complain if it were not carried out at once. He liked sauntering about the fields with a gun; and when he happened to get a hare or a wild duck, he would thrust his booty into his game-bag with peculiar zest, saying: "Now, you may be as tricky as you like, you won't escape me! Now you're *mine!*"

"You've a good horse," he began in his lisping voice, as he assisted me to get into the saddle; "I ought to have a horse like that! But where can I get one? I've no such luck. If you'd ask your mamma, now—remind her."

"Why, has she promised you one?"

"Promised? No; but I thought that in her great kindness——"

"You should apply to Martin Petrovitch."

"To Martin Petrovitch?" Sletkin repeated, dwelling on each syllable. "To him I'm no better than a worthless page, like Maximka. He keeps a tight hand on us, that he does, and you get nothing from him for all your toil."

"Really?"

"Yes, by God. He'll say: 'My word's sacred!'—and there, it's as though he's chopped it off with an axe. You may beg or not, it's all one. Besides, Anna Martinovna, my wife, is not in such favour with him as Evlampia Martinovna. O merciful God, bless us and save us!" he suddenly interrupted himself, flinging up his hands in despair. "Look! what's that? A whole half-rood of oats, our oats, some

wretch has gone and cut. The villain! Just see! Thieves! thieves! It's a true saying, to be sure, don't trust Eskovo, Beskovo, Erino, and Byelino! [these were the names of four villages near]. Ah, ah, what a thing! A ruble and a half's worth, or, maybe, two rubles, loss!"

In Sletkin's voice one could almost hear sobs. I gave my horse a poke in the ribs and rode away from him.

Sletkin's ejaculations still reached my hearing, when suddenly at a turn in the road I came upon the second daughter of Harlov, Evlampia, who had, in the words of Anna Martinovna, gone into the fields to get corn-flowers. A thick wreath of those flowers was twined about her head. We exchanged bows in silence. Evlampia, too, was very good-looking; as much so as her sister, though in a different style. She was tall and stoutly-built; everything about her was on a large scale: her head, and her feet and hands, and her snow-white teeth, and especially her eyes, prominent, languishing eyes, of the dark blue of glass beads. Everything about her, while still beautiful, had positively a monumental character (she was a true daughter of Martin Petrovitch). She did not, it seemed, know what to do with her massive fair mane, and she had twisted it in three plaits round her head. Her mouth was charming, crimson and fresh as a rose, and as she talked her upper lip was lifted in the middle in a very fascinating way. But there was something wild and almost fierce in the glance of her huge eyes. "A free bird, wild Cossack breed," so Martin Petrovitch used to speak of her. I was in awe of her. . . . This stately beauty reminded one of her father.

I rode on a little farther and heard her singing in a strong, even, rather harsh voice, a regular peasant voice; suddenly she ceased. I looked round and from the crest of the hill saw her standing beside Harlov's son-in-law, facing the rood of oats. The latter was gesticulating and pointing, but she stood without stirring. The sun lighted up her tall figure, and the wreath of corn-flowers shone brilliantly blue on her head.

IX

I believe I have already mentioned that, for this second daughter of Harlov's too, my mother had already prepared

a match. This was one of the poorest of our neighbours, a retired army major, Gavrila Fedulitch Zhitkov, a man no longer young, and, as he himself expressed it, not without a certain complacency, however, as though recommending himself, "battered and broken down." He could barely read and write, and was exceedingly stupid, but secretly aspired to become my mother's steward, as he felt himself to be a "man of action". "I can warm the peasants' hides for them, if I can do anything," he used to say, almost gnashing his own teeth, "because I was used to it," he used to explain, "in my former duties, I mean." Had Zhitkov been less of a fool, he would have realised that he had not the slightest chance of being steward to my mother, seeing that, for that, it would have been necessary to get rid of the present steward, one Kvitsinsky, a very capable Pole of great character, in whom my mother had the fullest confidence. Zhitkov had a long face, like a horse's; it was all overgrown with hair of a dusty whitish colour; his cheeks were covered with it right up to the eyes; and even in the severest frosts, it was sprinkled with an abundant sweat, like drops of dew. At the sight of my mother, he drew himself upright as a post, his head positively quivered with zeal, his huge hands slapped a little against his thighs, and his whole person seemed to express: "Command! . . . and I will strive my utmost!" My mother was under no illusion on the score of his abilities, which did not, however, hinder her from taking steps to marry him to Evlampia.

"Only, will you be able to manage her, my good sir?" she asked him one day.

Zhitkov smiled complacently.

"Upon my word, Natalia Nikolàevna! I used to keep a whole regiment in order; they were tame enough in my hands; and what's this? A trumpery business!"

"A regiment's one thing, sir, but a well-bred girl, a wife, is a very different matter," my mother observed with displeasure.

"Upon my word, ma'am! Natalia Nikolaevna!" Zhitkov cried again: "that we're quite able to understand. In one word: a young lady, a delicate person!"

"Well!" my mother decided at length, "Evlampia won't let herself be trampled upon."

X

One day—it was the month of June, and evening was coming on—a servant announced the arrival of Martin Petrovitch. My mother was surprised: we had not seen him for over a week, but he had never visited us so late before. "Something has happened!" she exclaimed in an undertone. The face of Martin Petrovitch, when he rolled into the room and at once sank into a chair near the door, wore such an unusual expression, it was so preoccupied and positively pale, that my mother involuntarily repeated her exclamation aloud. Martin Petrovitch fixed his little eyes upon her, was silent for a space, sighed heavily, was silent again, and articulated at last that he had come about something . . . which . . . was of a kind, that on account of . . .

Muttering these disconnected words, he suddenly got up and went out.

My mother rang, ordered the footman, who appeared, to overtake Martin Petrovitch at once and bring him back without fail, but the latter had already had time to get into his droshky and drive away.

Next morning, my mother, who was astonished and even alarmed, as much by Martin Petrovitch's strange behaviour as by the extraordinary expression of his face, was on the point of sending a special messenger to him, when he made his appearance. This time he seemed more composed.

"Tell me, my good friend, tell me," cried my mother, directly she saw him, "whatever has happened to you? I thought yesterday, upon my word I did. . . . 'Mercy on us!' I thought, 'hasn't our old friend gone right off his head?'"

"I've not gone off my head, madam," answered Martin Petrovitch; "I'm not that sort of man. But I want to consult with you."

"What about?"

"I'm only in doubt, whether it will be agreeable to you in this same contingency——"

"Speak away, speak away, my good sir, but more simply. Don't alarm me! What's this same contingency? Speak more plainly. Or is it your melancholy come upon you again?"

Harlov scowled. "No, it's not melancholy—that comes upon me in the new moon; but allow me to ask you, madam, what do you think about death?"

My mother was taken aback. "About what?"

"About death. Can death spare any one whatever in this world?"

"What have you got in your head, my good friend? Who of us is immortal? For all you're born a giant, even to you there'll be an end in time."

"There will! oh, there will!" Harlov assented and he looked downcast. "I've had a vision come to me in my dreams," he brought out at last.

"What are you saying?" my mother interrupted him.

"A vision in my dreams," he repeated—"I'm a seer of visions, you know!"

"You!"

"I. Didn't you know it?" Harlov sighed. "Well, so. . . . Over a week ago, madam, I lay down, on the very last day of eating meat before St. Peter's fast-day; I lay down after dinner to rest a bit, well, and so I fell asleep, and dreamed a raven colt ran into the room to me. And this colt began sporting about and grinning. Black as a beetle was the raven colt." Harlov ceased.

"Well?" said my mother.

"And all of a sudden this same colt turns round, and gives me a kick in the left elbow, right in the funny-bone. . . . I waked up; my arm would not move nor my leg either. Well, thinks I, it's paralysis; however, I worked them up and down, and got them to move again; only there were shooting pains in the joints a long time, and there are still. When I open my hand, the pains shoot through the joints."

"Why, Martin Petrovitch, you must have lain upon your arm somehow and crushed it."

"No, madam; pray, don't talk like that! It was an intimation . . . referring to my death, I mean."

"Well, upon my word," my mother was beginning.

"An intimation. Prepare thyself, man, as 't were to say. And therefore, madam, here is what I have to announce to you, without a moment's delay. Not wishing," Harlov suddenly began shouting, "that the same death should come upon me, the servant of God, unawares, I have planned in my

own mind this: to divide—now during my lifetime—my estate between my two daughters, Anna and Evlampia, according as God Almighty directs me"—Martin Petrovitch stopped, groaned, and added, "without a moment's delay."

"Well, that would be a good idea," observed my mother; "though I think you have no need to be in a hurry."

"And seeing that herein I desire," Harlov continued, raising his voice still higher, "to be observant of all due order and legality, so I humbly beg your young son, Dmitri Semyonovitch—I would not venture, madam, to trouble you—I beg the said Dmitri Semyonovitch, your son, and I claim of my kinsman, Bitchkov, as a plain duty, to assist at the ratification of the formal act and transference of possession to my two daughters—Anna, married, and Evlampia, spinster. Which act will be drawn up in readiness the day after to-morrow at twelve o'clock, at my own place, Eskovo, also called Kozulkino, in the presence of the ruling authorities and functionaries, who are thereto invited."

Martin Petrovitch with difficulty reached the end of this speech, which he had obviously learnt by heart, and which was interspersed with frequent sighs. . . . He seemed to have no breath left in his chest; his pale face was crimson again, and he several times wiped the sweat off it.

"So you've already composed the deed dividing your property?" my mother queried. "When did you manage that?"

"I managed it . . . oh! Neither eating, nor drinking——"

"Did you write it yourself?"

"Volodka . . . oh! helped."

"And have you forwarded a petition?"

"I have, and the chamber has sanctioned it, and notice has been given to the district court, and the temporary division of the local court has . . . oh! . . . been notified to be present."

My mother laughed. "I see, Martin Petrovitch, you've made every arrangement already—and how quickly. You've not spared money, I should say?"

"No, indeed, madam."

"Well, well. And you say you want to consult with me. Well, my little Dmitri can go; and I'll send Souvenir with

him, and speak to Kvitsinsky. . . . But you haven't invited Gavrila Fedulitch?"

"Gavrila Fedulitch—Mr. Zhitkov—has had notice . . . from me also. As a betrothed, it was only fitting."

Martin Petrovitch had obviously exhausted all the resources of his eloquence. Besides, it always seemed to me that he did not look altogether favourably on the match my mother had made for his daughter; possibly, he had expected a more advantageous marriage for his darling Evlampia.

He got up from his chair, and made a scrape with his foot. "Thank you for your consent."

"Where are you off to?" asked my mother. "Stay a bit; I'll order some lunch to be served you."

"Much obliged," responded Harlov. "But I cannot. . . . Oh! I must get home."

He backed and was about to move sideways, as his habit was, through the door.

"Stop, stop a minute," my mother went on, "can you possibly mean to make over the whole of your property without reserve to your daughters?"

"Certainly, without reserve."

"Well, but how about yourself—where are you going to live?"

Harlov positively flung up his hands in amazement. "You ask where? In my house, at home, as I've lived hitherto . . . so henceforward. Whatever difference could there be?"

"You have such confidence in your daughters and your son-in-law, then?"

"Were you pleased to speak of Volodka? A poor stick like him? Why, I can do as I like with him, whatever it is . . . what authority has he? As for them, my daughters, that is, to care for me till I'm in the grave, to give me meat and drink, and clothe me. . . . Merciful heavens! it's their first duty. I shall not long be an eyesore to them. Death's not over the hills—it's upon my shoulders."

"Death is in God's hands," observed my mother; "though that is their duty, to be sure. Only pardon me, Martin Petrovitch; your elder girl, Anna, is well known to be proud and imperious, and—well—the second has a fierce look. . . ."

"Natalia Nikolaevna!" Harlov broke in, "why do you say that? . . . Why, as though they . . . My daughters

. . . Why, as though I . . . Forget their duty? Never in their wildest dreams . . . Offer opposition? To whom? Their parent . . . Dare to do such a thing? Have they not my curse to fear? They've passed their life long in fear and in submission—and all of a sudden . . . Good Lord!"

Harlov choked, there was a rattle in his throat.

"Very well, very well," my mother made haste to soothe him; "only I don't understand all the same what has put it into your head to divide the property up now. It would have come to them afterwards, in any case. I imagine it's your melancholy that's at the bottom of it all."

"Eh, ma'am," Harlov rejoined, not without vexation, "you will keep coming back to that. There is, maybe, a higher power at work in this, and you talk of melancholy. I thought to do this, madam, because in my own person, while still in life, I wish to decide in my presence, who is to possess what, and with what I will reward each, so that they may possess, and feel thankfulness, and carry out my wishes, and what their father and benefactor has resolved upon, they may accept as a bountiful gift."

Harlov's voice broke again.

"Come, that's enough, that's enough, my good friend," my mother cut him short; "or your raven colt will be putting in an appearance in earnest."

"O Natalia Nikolaevna, don't talk to me of it," groaned Harlov. "That's my death come after me. Forgive my intrusion. And you, my little sir, I shall have the honour of expecting you the day after to-morrow."

Martin Petrovitch went out; my mother looked after him, and shook her head significantly. "This is a bad business," she murmured, "a bad business. You noticed"—she addressed herself to me—"he talked, and all the while seemed blinking, as though the sun were in his eyes; that's a bad sign. When a man's like that, his heart's sure to be heavy, and misfortune threatens him. You must go over the day after to-morrow with Vikenty Osipovitch and Souvenir."

XI

On the day appointed, our big family coach, with seats for four, harnessed with six bay horses, and with the head

coachman, the gray-bearded and portly Alexeitch, on the box, rolled smoothly up to the steps of our house. The importance of the act upon which Harlov was about to enter, and the solemnity with which he had invited us, had had their effect on my mother. She had herself given orders for this extraordinary state equipage to be brought out, and had directed Souvenir and me to put on our best clothes. She obviously wished to show respect to her protégé. As for Kvitsinsky, he always wore a frock-coat and white tie. Souvenir chatted like a magpie all the way, giggled, wondered whether his brother would apportion him anything, and thereupon called him a dummy and an old fogey. Kvitsinsky, a man of severe and bilious temperament, could not put up with it at last. "What can induce you," he observed, in his distinct Polish accent, "to keep up such a continual unseemly chatter? Can you really be incapable of sitting quiet without these 'wholly superfluous' [his favourite phrase] inanities?" "All right, d'rectly," Souvenir muttered discontentedly, and he fixed his squinting eyes on the carriage-window. A quarter of an hour had not passed, the smoothly trotting horses had scarcely begun to get warm under the straps of their new harness, when Harlov's homestead came into sight. Through the widely open gate, our coach rolled into the yard. The diminutive postillion, whose legs barely reached half-way down his horse's body, for the last time leaped up with a babyish shriek into the soft saddle, old Alexeitch at once spread out and raised his elbows, a slight "wo-o" was heard, and we stopped. The dogs did not bark to greet us, and the serf boys, in long smocks that gaped open over their big stomachs, had all hidden themselves. Harlov's son-in-law was awaiting us in the doorway. I remember I was particularly struck by the birch boughs stuck in on both sides of the steps, as though it were Trinity Sunday. "Grandeur upon grandeur," Souvenir, who was the first to alight, squeaked through his nose. And certainly there was a solemn air about everything. Harlov's son-in-law was wearing a plush cravat with a satin bow, and an extraordinarily tight tail-coat; while Maximka, who popped out behind his back, had his hair so saturated with kvas that it positively dripped. We went into the parlour, and saw Martin Petrovitch towering—yes, positively towering—motionless, in the middle of the room. I don't know what

Souvenir's and Kvitsinsky's feelings were at the sight of his colossal figure; but I felt something akin to awe. Martin Petrovitch was attired in a gray Cossack coat—his militia uniform of 1812 it must have been—with a black stand-up collar. A bronze medal was to be seen on his breast, a sabre hung at his side; he laid his left hand on the hilt, with his right he was leaning on the table, which was covered with a red cloth. Two sheets of paper, full of writing, lay on the table. Harlov stood motionless, not even gasping; and what dignity was expressed in his attitude, what confidence in himself, in his unlimited and unquestionable power! He barely greeted us with a motion of the head, and barely articulating "Be seated!" pointed the forefinger of his left hand in the direction of some chairs set in a row. Against the right-hand wall of the parlour were standing Harlov's daughters wearing their Sunday clothes: Anna, in a shot lilac-green dress, with a yellow silk sash; Evlampia, in pink, with crimson ribbons. Near them stood Zhitkov, in a new uniform, with the habitual expression of dull and greedy expectation in his eyes, and with a greater profusion of sweat than usual over his hirsute countenance. On the left side of the room sat the priest, in a threadbare snuff-coloured cassock, an old man, with rough brown hair. This head of hair, and the dejected lack-lustre eyes, and the big wrinkled hands, which seemed a burden even to himself, and lay like two rocks on his knees, and the tarred boots which peeped out beneath his cassock, all seemed to tell of a joyless laborious life. His parish was a very poor one. Beside him was the local police captain, a fattish, palish, dirty-looking little gentleman, with soft puffy little hands and feet, black eyes, black short-clipped mustaches, a continual cheerful but yet sickly little smile on his face. He had the reputation of being a great taker of bribes, and even a tyrant, as the expression was in those days. But not only the gentry, even the peasants were used to him, and liked him. He bent very free and easy and rather ironical looks around him; it was clear that all this "procedure" amused him. In reality, the only part that had any interest for him was the light lunch and spirits in store for us. But the attorney sitting near him, a lean man with a long face, narrow whiskers from his ears to his nose, as they were worn in the days of Alexander the First, was absorbed with

his whole soul in Martin Petrovitch's proceedings, and never took his big serious eyes off him. In his concentrated attention and sympathy, he kept moving and twisting his lips, though without opening his mouth. Souvenir stationed himself next him, and began talking to him in a whisper, after first informing me that he was the chief freemason in the province. The temporary division of the local court consists, as every one knows, of the police captain, the attorney, and the rural police commissioner; but the latter was either absent or kept himself in the background, so that I did not notice him. He bore, however, the nickname "the non-existent" among us in the district, just as there are tramps called "the non-identified." I sat next Souvenir, Kvitsinsky next me. The face of the practical Pole showed unmistakable annoyance at our "wholly superfluous" expedition, and unnecessary waste of time. . . . "A grand lady's caprices! these Russian grandees' fancies!" he seemed to be murmuring to himself . . . "Ugh, these Russians!"

XII

When we were all seated, Martin Petrovitch hunched his shoulders, cleared his throat, scanned us all with his bearlike little eyes, and with a noisy sigh began as follows:

"Gentlemen, I have called you together for the following purpose. I am grown old, gentlemen, and overcome by infirmities. . . . Already I have had an intimation, the hour of death steals on, like a thief in the night. . . . Isn't that so, father?" he addressed the priest.

The priest started. "Quite so, quite so," he mumbled, his beard shaking.

"And therefore," continued Martin Petrovitch, suddenly raising his voice, "not wishing the said death to come upon me unawares, I purposed." . . . Martin Petrovitch proceeded to repeat, word for word, the speech he had made to my mother two days before. "In accordance with this my determination," he shouted louder than ever, "this deed [he struck his hand on the papers lying on the table] has been drawn up by me, and the presiding authorities have been invited by me, and wherein my will consists the following points will treat. I have ruled, my day is over!"

Martin Petrovitch put his round iron spectacles on his ose, took one of the written sheets from the table, and began:

"Deed of partition of the estate of the retired non-commissioned officer and nobleman, Martin Harlov, drawn up by imself in his full and right understanding, and by his own ood judgment, and wherein is precisely defined what benets are assigned to his two daughters, Anna and Evlampia—ow!—[they bowed], and in what way the serfs and other roperty, and live stock, be apportioned between the said aughters! Under my hand!"

"This is their document!" the police captain whispered o Kvitsinsky, with his invariable smile, "they want to read t for the beauty of the style, but the legal deed is made out ormally, without all these flourishes."

Souvenir was beginning to snigger. . . .

"In accordance with my will," put in Harlov, who had aught the police captain's remark.

"In accordance in every point," the latter hastened to repond cheerfully; "only, as you're aware, Martin Petrovitch, here's no dispensing with formality. And unnecessary deails have been removed. For the chamber can't enter into he question of spotted cows and fancy drakes."

"Come here!" boomed Harlov to his son-in-law, who had ome into the room behind us, and remained standing with an bsequious air near the door. He skipped up to his father-n-law at once.

"There, take it and read! It's hard for me. Only mind nd don't mumble it! Let all the gentlemen present be able o understand it."

Sletkin took the paper in both hands, and began timidly, ut distinctly, and with taste and feeling, to read the deed of artition. There was set forth in it with the greatest accuacy just what was assigned to Anna and what to Evlampia, nd how the division was to be made. Harlov from time to ime interspersed the reading with phrases. "Do you hear, hat's for you, Anna, for your zeal!" Or: "That I give you, Evlampia!" and both the sisters bowed, Anna from the waist, Evlampia simply with a motion of the head. Harlov looked t them with stern dignity. "The farmhouse [the little ew building]" was assigned by him to Evlampia, as the ounger daughter, "by the well-known custom." The read-

er's voice quivered and resounded at these words, unfavourable for himself; while Zhitkov licked his lips. Evlampia gave him a sidelong glance; had I been in Zhitkov's shoes, I should not have liked that glance. The scornful expression, characteristic of Evlampia, as of every genuine Russian beauty, had a peculiar shade at that moment. For himself Martin Petrovitch reserved the right to go on living in the rooms he occupied, and assigned to himself, under the name of "rations," a full allowance "of normal provisions," and ten rubles a month for clothes. The last phrase of the deed Harlov wished to read himself. "And this my parental will," it ran, "to carry out and observe is a sacred and binding duty on my daughters, seeing it is a command; seeing that I am, after God, their father and head, and am not bounden to render an account to any, nor have so rendered. And do they carry out my will, so will my fatherly blessing be with them, but should they not do so, which God forbid, then will they be overtaken by my parental curse that cannot be averted, now and forever, amen!" Harlov raised the deed high above his head. Anna at once dropped on her knees and touched the ground with her forehead; her husband, too, doubled up after her. "Well, and you?" Harlov turned to Evlampia. She crimsoned all over, and she too bowed to the earth, Zhitkov bent his whole carcass forward.

"Sign!" cried Harlov, pointing his forefinger to the bottom of the deed. "Here: 'I thank and accept, Anna.' 'I thank and accept, Evlampia!'"

Both daughters rose, and signed one after another. Sletkin rose too, and was feeling after the pen, but Harlov moved him aside, sticking his middle finger into his cravat, so that he gasped. The silence lasted a moment. Suddenly Martin Petrovitch gave a sort of sob, and muttering: "Well, now it's all yours!" moved away. His daughters and son-in-law looked at one another, went up to him and began kissing him just above his elbow. His shoulder they could not reach.

XIII

The police captain read the real formal document, the deed of gift, drawn up by Martin Petrovitch. Then he went out on to the steps with the attorney and explained what had

taken place to the crowd assembled at the gates, consisting of the witnesses required by law and other people from the neighbourhood, Harlov's peasants, and a few house-serfs. Then began the ceremony of the new owners entering into possession. They came out, too, upon the steps, and the police captain pointed to them when, slightly scowling with one eyebrow, while his careless face assumed for an instant a threatening air, he exhorted the crowd to "subordination." He might well have dispensed with these exhortations: a less unruly set of countenances than those of the Harlov peasants, I imagine, have never existed in creation. Clothed in thin smocks and torn sheepskins, but very tightly girt round their waists, as is always the peasants' way on solemn occasions, they stood motionless as though cut out of stone, and whenever the police captain uttered any exclamation such as "D'ye hear, you brutes? D'ye understand, you devils?" they suddenly bowed all at once, as though at the word of command. Each of these "brutes and devils" held his cap tight in both hands, and never took his eyes off the window, where Martin Petrovitch's figure was visible. The witnesses themselves were hardly less awed. "Is any impediment known to you," the police captain roared at them, "against the entrance into possession of these the sole and legitimate heirs and daughters of Martin Petrovitch Harlov?"

All the witnesses seemed to huddle together at once.

"Do you know any, you devils?" the police captain shouted again.

"We know nothing, your Excellency," responded sturdily a little old man, marked with smallpox, with a clipped beard and whiskers, an old soldier.

"I say! Eremeitch's a bold fellow!" the witnesses said of him as they dispersed.

In spite of the police captain's entreaties, Harlov would not come out with his daughters on to the steps. "My subjects will obey my will without that!" he answered. Something like sadness had come over him on the completion of the conveyance. His face had grown pale. This new unprecedented expression of sadness looked so out of place on Martin Petrovitch's broad and kindly features that I positively was at a loss what to think. Was an attack of melancholy coming over him? The peasants, on their side, too,

were obviously puzzled. And no wonder! "The master's alive—there he stands, and such a master, too; Martin Petrovitch! And all of a sudden he won't be their owner. . . . A queer thing!" I don't know whether Harlov had an inkling of the notions that were straying through his "subjects'" heads, or whether he wanted to display his power for the last time, but he suddenly opened the little window, stuck his head out, and shouted in a voice of thunder: "Obedience!" Then he slammed to the window. The peasants' bewilderment was certainly not dispelled nor decreased by this proceeding. They became stonier than ever, and even seemed to cease looking at anything. The group of house-serfs (among them were two sturdy wenches, in short chintz gowns, with muscles such as one might perhaps match in Michelangelo's Last Judgment, and one utterly decrepit old man, hoary with age and half blind, in a threadbare frieze cloak, rumoured to have been "cornet-player" in the days of Potemkin,—the page Maximka, Harlov had reserved for himself, this group showed more life than the peasants; at least, it moved restlessly about. The new mistresses themselves were very dignified in their attitude, especially Anna. Her thin lips tightly compressed, she looked obstinately down . . . her stern figure augured little good to the house-serfs. Evlampia, too, did not raise her eyes; only once she turned round and deliberately, as it were with surprise, scanned her betrothed, Zhitkov, who had thought fit, following Sletkin, to come out, too, on to the steps. "What business have you here?" those handsome prominent eyes seemed to demand. Sletkin was the most changed of all. A bustling cheeriness showed itself in his whole bearing, as though he were overtaken by hunger; the movements of his head and his legs were as obsequious as ever, but how gleefully he kept working his arms, how fussily he twitched his shoulder-blades! "Arrived at last!" he seemed to say. Having finished the ceremony of the entrance into possession, the police captain, whose mouth was literally watering at the prospect of lunch, rubbed his hands in that peculiar manner which usually precedes the tossing off of the first glass of spirits. But it appeared that Martin Petrovitch wished first to have a service performed with sprinklings of holy-water. The priest put on an ancient and decrepit chasuble; a decrepit deacon came out of the kitchen, with diffi-

culty kindling the incense in an old brazen church-vessel. The service began. Harlov sighed continually; he was unable, owing to his corpulence, to bow to the ground, but crossing himself with his right hand and bending his head, he pointed with the forefinger of his left hand to the floor. Sletkin positively beamed and even shed tears. Zhitkov, with dignity, in martial fashion, flourished his fingers only slightly between the third and fourth button of his uniform. Kvitsinsky, as a Catholic, remained in the next room. But the attorney prayed so fervently, sighed so sympathetically after Martin Petrovitch, and so persistently muttered and chewed his lips, turning his eyes upward, that I felt moved, as I looked at him, and began to pray fervently too. At the conclusion of the service and the sprinkling with holy-water, during which every one present, even the blind cornet-player, the contemporary of Potemkin, even Kvitsinsky, moistened their eyes with holy-water, Anna and Evlampia once more, at Martin Petrovitch's bidding, prostrated themselves to the ground to thank him. Then at last came the moment of lunch. There were a great many dishes and all very nice; we all ate terribly much. The inevitable bottle of Don wine made its appearance. The police captain, who was of all of us the most familiar with the usages of the world, and besides, the representative of government, was the first to propose the toast to the health "of the fair proprietresses!" Then he proposed we should drink to the health of our most honoured and most generous-hearted friend, Martin Petrovitch. At the words "most generous-hearted," Sletkin uttered a shrill little cry and ran to kiss his benefactor. . . . "There, that'll do, that'll do," muttered Harlov, as it were with annoyance, keeping him off with his elbow. . . . But at this point a not quite pleasant, as they say, incident took place.

XIV

Souvenir, who had been drinking continuously ever since the beginning of luncheon, suddenly got up from his chair as red as a beet-root, and pointing his finger at Martin Petrovitch, went off into his mawkish, paltry laugh.

"Generous-hearted! Generous-hearted!" he began croak-

ing; "but we shall see whether this generosity will be much to his taste when he's stripped naked, the servant of God . . . and out in the snow, too!"

"What rot are you talking, fool?" said Harlov contemptuously.

"Fool! fool!" repeated Souvenir. "God Almighty alone knows which of us is the real fool. But you, brother, did my sister, your wife, to her death, and now you've done for yourself . . . ha-ha-ha!"

"How dare you insult our honoured benefactor?" Sletkin began shrilly, and, tearing himself away from Martin Petrovitch, whose shoulder he had clutched, he flew at Souvenir. "But let me tell you, if our benefactor desires it, we can cancel the deed this very minute!"

"And yet, you'll strip him naked, and turn him out into the snow . . ." returned Souvenir, retreating behind Kvitsinsky.

"Silence!" thundered Harlov. "I'll pound you into a jelly! And you hold your tongue too, puppy!" he turned to Sletkin; "don't put in your word where you're not wanted! If I, Martin Petrovitch Harlov, have decided to make a deed of partition, who can cancel the same act against my will? Why, in the whole world there is no power . . ."

"Martin Petrovitch!" the attorney began in a mellow bass—he too had drunk a good deal, but his dignity was only increased thereby—"but how if the gentleman has spoken the truth? You have done a generous action, to be sure, but how if God forbid—in reality, in place of fitting gratitude, some affront come of it?"

I stole a glance at both Martin Petrovitch's daughters. Anna's eyes were simply pinned upon the speaker, and a face more spiteful, more snakelike, and more beautiful in its very spite I had certainly never seen. Evlampia sat turned away, with her arms folded. A smile more scornful than ever curved her full, rosy lips.

Harlov got up from his chair, opened his mouth, but apparently his tongue failed him. . . . He suddenly brought his fist down on the table, so that everything in the room danced and rang.

"Father," Anna said hurriedly, "they do not know us, and that is why they judge of us so. But don't, please, make

yourself ill. You are angered for nothing, indeed; see, your face is, as it were, twisted awry."

Harlov looked towards Evlampia; she did not stir, though Zhitkov, sitting beside her, gave her a poke in the side.

"Thank you, my daughter Anna," said Harlov huskily; "you are a sensible girl; I rely upon you and on your husband too." Sletkin once more gave vent to a shrill little sound; Zhitkov expanded his chest and gave a little scrape with his foot; but Harlov did not observe his efforts. "This dolt," he went on, with a motion of his chin in the direction of Souvenir, "is pleased to get a chance to tease me; but you, my dear sir," he addressed himself to the attorney, "it is not for you to pass judgment on Martin Harlov; that is something beyond you. Though you are a man in official position, your words are most foolish. Besides, the deed is done, there will be no going back from my determination. . . . Now, I will wish you good day, I am going away. I am no longer the master of this house, but a guest in it. Anna, do you do your best; but I will go to my own room. Enough!"

Martin Petrovitch turned his back on us, and, without adding another word, walked deliberately out of the room.

This sudden withdrawal on the part of our host could not but break up the party, especially as the two hostesses also vanished not long after. Sletkin vainly tried to keep us. The police captain did not fail to blame the attorney for his uncalled-for candour. "Couldn't help it!" the latter responded. . . . "My conscience spoke."

"There, you see that he's a mason," Souvenir whispered to me.

"Conscience!" retorted the police captain. "We know all about your conscience! I suppose it's in your pocket, just the same as it is with us sinners!"

The priest, meanwhile, even though already on his feet, foreseeing the speedy termination of the repast, lifted mouthful after mouthful to his mouth without a pause.

"You've got a fine appetite, I see," Sletkin observed to him sharply.

"Storing up for the future," the priest responded with a meek grimace; years of hunger were expressed in that reply.

The carriages rattled up . . . and we separated. On the way home, no one hindered Souvenir's chatter and silly

tricks, as Kvitsinsky had announced that he was sick of all this "wholly superfluous" unpleasantness, and had set off home before us on foot. In his place, Zhitkov took a seat in our coach. The retired major wore a most dissatisfied expression, and kept twitching his mustaches like a spider.

"Well, your noble Excellency," lisped Souvenir, "is subordination exploded, eh? Wait a bit and see what will happen! They'll give you the sack too. Ah, a poor bridegroom you are, a poor bridegroom, an unlucky bridegroom!"

Souvenir was positively beside himself; while poor Zhitkov could do nothing but twitch his mustaches.

When I got home I told my mother all I had seen. She heard me to the end, and shook her head several times. "It's a bad business," was her comment. "I don't like all these innovations!"

XV

Next day Martin Petrovitch came to dinner. My mother congratulated him on the successful conclusion of his project. "You are now a free man," she said, "and ought to feel more at ease."

"More at ease, to be sure, madam," answered Martin Petrovitch, by no means, however, showing in the expression of his face that he really was more at ease. "Now I can meditate upon my soul, and make ready for my last hour, as I ought."

"Well," queried my mother, "and do the shooting pains still tingle in your arms?"

Harlov twice clenched and unclenched his left arm. "They do, madam; and I've something else to tell you. As I begin to drop asleep, some one cries in my head: 'Take care!' 'Take care!'"

"That's nerves," observed my mother, and she began speaking of the previous day, and referred to certain circumstances which had attended the completion of the deed of partition. . . .

"To be sure, to be sure," Harlov interrupted her, "there was something of the sort . . . of no consequence. Only there's something I would tell you," he added, hesitating—"I was not disturbed yesterday by Souvenir's silly words—

even Mr. Attorney, though he's no fool—even he did not trouble me; no, it was quite another person disturbed me—" Here Harlov faltered.

"Who?" asked my mother.

Harlov fastened his eyes upon her; "Evlampia!"

"Evlampia? Your daughter? How was that?"

"Upon my word, madam, she was like a stone! nothing but a statue! Can it be she has no feeling? Her sister, Anna—well, she was all she should be. She's a keen-witted creature! But Evlampia—why, I'd shown her—I must own—so much partiality! Can it be she's no feeling for me! It's clear I'm in a bad way; it's clear I've a feeling that I'm not long for this world, since I make over everything to them; and yet she's like a stone! she might at least utter a sound! Bows—yes, she bows, but there's no thankfulness to be seen."

"There, give over," observed my mother, "we'll marry her to Gavrila Fedulitch . . . she'll soon get softer in his hands."

Martin Petrovitch once more looked from under his brows at my mother. "Well, there's Gavrila Fedulitch, to be sure! You have confidence in him, then, madam?"

"I've confidence in him."

"Very well; you should know best, to be sure. But Evlampia, let me tell you, is like me. The character is just the same. She has the wild Cossack blood, and her heart's like a burning coal!"

"Why, do you mean to tell me you've a heart like that, my dear sir?"

Harlov made no answer. A brief silence followed.

"What are you going to do, Martin Petrovitch," my mother began, "in what way do you mean to set about saving your soul now? Will you set off to Mitrophan or to Kiev, or maybe you'll go to the Optin desert, as it's in the neighbourhood? There, they do say, there's a holy monk appeared . . . Father Makary they call him, no one remembers any one like him! He sees right through all sins."

"If she really turns out an ungrateful daughter," Harlov enunciated in a husky voice, "then it would be better for me, I believe, to kill her with my own hands!"

"What are you saying! Lord, have mercy on you!" cried my mother. "Think what you're saying! There, see,

what a pretty pass it's come to. You should have listened to me the other day when you came to consult me! Now, here, you'll go tormenting yourself, instead of thinking of your soul! You'll be tormenting yourself, and all to no purpose! Yes! Here you're complaining now, and faint-hearted . . ."

This reproach seemed to stab Harlov to the heart. All his old pride came back to him with a rush. He shook himself, and thrust out his chin. "I am not a man, madam, Natalia Nikolaevna, to complain or be faint-hearted," he began sullenly. "I simply wished to reveal my feelings to you as my benefactress and a person I respect. But the Lord God knows [here he raised his hand high above his head] that this globe of earth may crumble to pieces before I will go back from my word, or . . . [here he positively snorted] show a faint heart, or regret what I have done! I had good reasons, be sure! My daughters will never forget their duty, forever and ever. Amen!"

My mother stopped her ears. "What's this for, my good sir, like a trumpet-blast! If you really have such faith in your family, well, praise the Lord for it! You've quite put my brains in a whirl!"

Martin Petrovitch begged pardon, sighed twice, and was silent. My mother once more referred to Kiev, the Optin desert, and Father Makary. . . . Harlov assented, said that "he must . . . he must . . . he would have to . . . his soul" . . . and that was all. He did not regain his cheerfulness before he went away. From time to time he clenched and unclenched his fist, looked at his open hand, said that what he feared above everything was dying without repentance, from a stroke, and that he had made a vow to himself not to get angry, as anger vitiated his blood and drove it to his head. . . . Besides, he had now withdrawn from everything. What grounds could he have for getting angry? Let other people trouble themselves now and vitiate their blood!

As he took leave of my mother he looked at her in a strange way, mournfully and questioningly . . . and suddenly, with a rapid movement, drew out of his pocket the volume of The Worker's Leisure Hour, and thrust it into my mother's hand.

"What's that?" she inquired.

"Read . . . here," he said hurriedly, "where the corer's turned down, about death. It seems to me, it's terribly ell said, but I can't make it out at all. Can't you explain to me, my benefactress? I'll come back again and you xplain it me."

With these words Martin Petrovitch went away.

"He's in a bad way, he's in a bad way," observed my nother, directly he had disappeared through the doorway, nd she set to work upon The Leisure Hour. On the page urned down by Harlov were the following words:

"Death is a grand and solemn work of nature. It is nothing else than that the spirit, inasmuch as it is lighter, ner, and infinitely more penetrating than those elements nder whose sway it has been subject, nay, even than the orce of electricity itself, so is chemically purified and striveth pward till what time it attaineth an equally spiritual abiding-lace for itself . . ." and so on.

My mother read this passage through twice, and exclaiming: "Pooh!" she flung the book away.

Three days later, she received the news that her sister's husband was dead, and set off to her sister's country-seat, aking me with her. My mother proposed to spend a month vith her, but she stayed on till late in the autumn, and it was nly at the end of September that we returned to our own state.

XVI

The first news with which my valet, Prokofy, greeted me he regarded himself as the seignorial huntsman) was that here was an immense number of wild snipe on the wing, nd that in the birch-copse near Eskovo (Harlov's property), specially, they were simply swarming. I had three hours efore me till dinner-time. I promptly seized my gun and ny game-bag, and with Prokofy and a setter dog hastened o the Eskovo copse. We certainly did find a great many vild snipe there, and, firing about thirty charges, killed five. As I hurried homewards with my booty, I saw a peasant loughing near the roadside. His horse had stopped, and vith tearful and angry abuse he was mercilessly tugging with he cord reins at the animal's head, which was bent on one

side. I looked attentively at the luckless beast, whose ribs were all but through its skin, and, bathed in sweat, heaved up and down with convulsive, irregular movements like a blacksmith's bellows. I recognised it at once as the decrepit old mare, with the scar on her shoulder, who had served Martin Petrovitch so many years.

"Is Mr. Harlov living?" I asked Prokofy. The chase had so completely absorbed us, that up to that instant we had not talked of anything.

"Yes, he's alive. Why?"

"But that's his mare, isn't it? Do you mean to say he's sold her?"

"His mare it is, to be sure; but as to selling, he never sold her. But they took her away from him, and handed her over to that peasant."

"How, took it? And he consented?"

"They never asked his consent. Things have changed here in your absence," Prokofy observed, with a faint smile in response to my look of amazement; "worse luck! My goodness, yes! Now Sletkin's master, and orders every one about."

"But Martin Petrovitch?"

"Why, Martin Petrovitch has become the very last person here, you may say. He's on bread and water—what more can one say? They've crushed him altogether. Mark my words; they'll drive him out of the house."

The idea that it was possible to *drive* such a giant had never entered my head. "And what does Zhitkov say to it?" I asked at last. "I suppose he's married to the second daughter?"

"Married?" repeated Prokofy, and this time he grinned all over his face. "They won't let him into the house. 'We don't want you,' they say; 'get along home with you.' It's as I said; Sletkin directs every one."

"But what does the young lady say?"

"Evlampia Martinovna? Ah, master, I could tell you . . . but you're young—one must think of that. Things are going on here that are . . . oh! . . . oh! . . . oh! Hey! why Dianka's setting, I do believe!"

My dog actually had stopped short, before a thick oak-bush which bordered a narrow ravine by the roadside. Pro-

:ofy and I ran up to the dog; a snipe flew up out of the bush, ve both fired at it and missed; the snipe settled in another ılace; we followed it.

The soup was already on the table when I got back. My nother scolded me. "What's the meaning of it?" she said vith displeasure; "the very first day, and you keep us wait- ng for dinner." I brought her the wild snipe I had killed; he did not even look at them. There were also in the room ɔouvenir, Kvitsinsky, and Zhitkov. The retired major was ıuddled in a corner, for all the world like a schoolboy in lisgrace. His face wore an expression of mingled confusion ınd annoyance; his eyes were red. . . . One might positively ıave imagined he had recently been in tears. My mother emained in an ill humour. I was at no great pains to sur- nise that my late arrival did not count for much in it. Dur- ng dinner-time she hardly talked at all. The major turned ıeseeching glances upon her from time to time, but ate a ;ood dinner nevertheless. Souvenir was all of a shake. Kvitsinsky preserved his habitual self-confidence of de- neanour.

"Vikenty Osipitch," my mother addressed him, "I beg 'ou to send a carriage to-morrow for Martin Petrovitch, ince it has come to my knowledge that he has none of his ıwn. And bid them tell him to come without fail, that I lesire to see him."

Kvitsinsky was about to make some rejoinder, but he estrained himself.

"And let Sletkin know," continued my mother, "that I ommand him to present himself before me . . . Do you ıear? I com . . . mand!"

"Yes, just so . . . that scoundrel ought—" Zhitkov was ıeginning in a subdued voice; but my mother gave him such contemptuous look, that he promptly turned away and was ilent.

"Do you hear? I command!" repeated my mother.

"Certainly, madam," Kvitsinsky replied submissively but vith dignity.

"Martin Petrovitch won't come!" Souvenir whispered to ne, as he came out of the dining-room with me after dinner. You should just see what's happened to him! It's past omprehension! It's come to this, that whatever they say to

him, he doesn't understand a word! Yes! They've got the snake under the pitchfork!"

And Souvenir went off into his revolting laugh.

XVII

Souvenir's prediction turned out correct. Martin Petrovitch would not come to my mother. She was not at all pleased with this, and despatched a letter to him. He sent her a square bit of paper, on which the following words were written in big letters: "Indeed I can't. I should die of shame. Let me go to my ruin. Thanks. Don't torture me.—Martin Harlov." Sletkin did come, but not on the day on which my mother had "commanded" his attendance, but twenty-four hours later. My mother gave orders that he should be shown into her boudoir. . . . God knows what their interview was about, but it did not last long; a quarter of an hour, not more. Sletkin came out of my mother's room, crimson all over, and with such a viciously spiteful and insolent expression of face, that, meeting him in the drawing-room, I was simply petrified, while Souvenir, who was hanging about there, stopped short in the middle of a snigger. My mother came out of her boudoir, also very red in the face, and announced, in the hearing of all, that Mr. Sletkin was never, upon any pretext, to be admitted to her presence again, and that if Martin Petrovitch's daughters were to make bold—they've impudence enough, said she—to present themselves, they, too, were to be refused admittance. At dinner-time she suddenly exclaimed: "The vile little Jew! I picked him out of the gutter, I made him a career, he owes everything, everything to me—and he dares to tell me I've no business to meddle in their affairs! that Martin Petrovitch is full of whims and fancies, and it's impossible to humour him! Humour him, indeed! What a thing to say! Ah, he's an ungrateful wretch! An insolent little Jew!"

Major Zhitkov, who happened to be one of the company at dinner, imagined that now it was no less than the will of the Almighty for him to seize the opportunity and put in his word . . . but my mother promptly settled him. "Well, and you're a fine one, too, my man!" she commented. "Couldn't get the upper hand of a girl, and he an officer!

In command of a squadron! I can fancy how it obeyed you! He take a steward's place indeed! a fine steward he'd make!"

Kvitsinsky, who was sitting at the end of the table, smiled to himself a little malignantly, while poor Zhitkov could do nothing but twitch his mustaches, lift his eyebrows, and bury the whole of his hirsute countenance in his napkin.

After dinner, he went out on to the steps to smoke his pipe as usual, and he struck me as so miserable and forlorn, that, although I had never liked him, I joined myself on to him at once.

"How was it, Gavrila Fedulitch," I began without further beating about the bush, "that your affair with Evlampia Martinovna was broken off? I'd expected you to be married long ago."

The retired major looked at me dejectedly.

"A snake in the grass," he began, uttering each letter of each syllable with bitter distinctness, "has poisoned me with his fang, and turned all my hopes in life to ashes. And I could tell you, Dmitri Semyonovitch, all his hellish wiles, but I'm afraid of angering your mamma. ["You're young yet"—Prokofy's expression flashed across my mind.] Even as it is—" Zhitkov groaned.

"Patience . . . patience . . . nothing else is left me." He struck his fist upon his chest. "Patience, old soldier, patience. I served the Czar faithfully . . . honourably . . . yes. I spared neither blood nor sweat, and now see what I am brought to. Had it been in the regiment—and the matter depending upon me," he continued after a short silence, spent in convulsively sucking at his cherry-wood pipe, "I'd have . . . I'd have given it him with the flat side of my sword . . . three times over . . . till he'd had enough. . . ."

Zhitkov took the pipe out of his mouth, and fixed his eyes on vacancy, as though admiring the picture he had conjured up.

Souvenir ran up, and began quizzing the major. I turned away from them, and determined, come what may, I would see Martin Petrovitch with my own eyes. . . . My boyish curiosity was greatly stirred.

XVIII

Next day I set out with my gun and dog, but without Prokofy, to the Eskovo copse. It was an exquisite day; I fancy there are no days like that in September anywhere but in Russia. The stillness was such that one could hear, a hundred paces off, the squirrel hopping over the dry leaves, and the broken twig just feebly catching at the other branches, and falling, at last, on the soft grass—to lie there forever, not to stir again till it rotted away. The air, neither warm nor chill, but only fragrant, and as it were keen, was faintly, deliciously stinging in my eyes and on my cheeks. A long spider-web, delicate as a silken thread, with a white ball in the middle, floated smoothly in the air, and sticking to the butt-end of my gun, stretched straight out in the air—a sign of settled and warm weather. The sun shone with a brightness as soft as moonlight. Wild snipe were to be met with pretty often; but I did not pay special attention to them. I knew that the copse went on almost to Harlov's homestead, right up to the hedge of his garden, and I turned my steps in that direction, though I could not even imagine how I should get into the place itself, and was even doubtful whether I ought to try to do so, as my mother was so angry with its new owners. Sounds of life and humanity reached me from no great distance. I listened. . . . Some one was coming through the copse . . . straight towards me.

"You should have said so straight out, dear," I heard a woman's voice.

"Be reasonable," another voice broke in, the voice of a man. "Can one do it all at once?"

I knew the voices. There was the gleam of a woman's blue gown through the reddening nut-bushes. Beside it stood a dark full coat. Another instant—and there stepped out into the glade, five paces from me, Sletkin and Evlampia.

They were disconcerted at once. Evlampia promptly stepped back, away into the bushes. Sletkin thought a little, and came up to me. There was not a trace to be seen in his face of the obsequious meekness with which he had paced up and down Harlov's courtyard, four months before, rubbing up my horse's snaffle. But neither could I perceive in it

the insolent defiance, which had so struck me on the previous day, on the threshold of my mother's boudoir. It was still as white and pretty as ever, but seemed broader and more solid.

"Well, have you shot many snipe?" he asked me, raising his cap, smiling, and passing his hand over his black curls; "you are shooting in our copse. . . . You are very welcome. We would not hinder you. . . . Quite the contrary."

"I have killed nothing to-day," I rejoined, answering his first question; "and I will go out of your copse this instant."

Sletkin hurriedly put on his cap. "Indeed, why so? We would not drive you out—indeed, we're delighted. . . . Here's Evlampia Martinovna will say the same. Evlampia Martinovna, come here. Where have you hidden yourself?" Evlampia's head appeared behind the bushes. But she did not come up to us. She had grown prettier, and seemed taller and bigger than ever.

"I'm very glad, to tell the truth," Sletkin went on, "that I have met you. Though you are still young in years, you have plenty of good sense already. Your mother was pleased to be very angry with me yesterday—she would not listen to reason of any sort from me, but I declare, as before God, so before you now, I am not to blame in any way. We can't treat Martin Petrovitch otherwise than we do; he's fallen into complete dotage. One can't humour all his whims, really. But we show him all due respect. Only ask Evlampia Martinovna."

Evlampia did not stir; her habitual scornful smile flickered about her lips, and her large eyes watched me with no friendly expression.

"But why, Vladimir Vassilievitch, have you sold Martin Petrovitch's mare?" (I was particularly impressed by that mare being in the possession of a peasant.)

"His mare, why did we sell it? Why, Lord have mercy on us—what use was she? She was simply eating her head off. But with the peasant she can work at the plough anyway. As for Martin Petrovitch, if he takes a fancy to drive out anywhere, he's only to ask us. We wouldn't refuse him a conveyance. On a holiday, we should be pleased."

"Vladimir Vassilievitch," said Evlampia huskily, as

though calling him away, and she still did not stir from her place. She was twisting some stalks of ripple-grass around her fingers and snapping off their heads, slapping them against each other.

"About the page Maximka again," Sletkin went on, "Martin Petrovitch complains because we've taken him away and apprenticed him. But kindly consider the matter for yourself. Why, what had he to do waiting on Martin Petrovitch? Kick up his heels; nothing more. And he couldn't even wait on him properly, on account of his stupidity and his youth. Now we have sent him away to a harness-maker's. He'll be turned into a first-rate handicraftsman—and make a good thing of it for himself—and pay us ransom-money too. And, living in a small way as we do, that's a matter of importance. On a little farm like ours, one can't afford to let anything slip."

"And this is the man Martin Petrovitch called a 'poor stick,'" I thought. "But who reads to Martin Petrovitch now?" I asked.

"Why, what is there to read? He had one book—but, luckily, that's been mislaid somewhere. . . . And what use is reading at his age?"

"And who shaves him?" I asked again.

Sletkin gave an approving laugh, as though in response to an amusing joke. "Why, nobody. At first he used to singe his beard in the candle—but now he lets it be altogether. And it's lovely!"

"Vladimir Vassilievitch!" Evlampia repeated insistently: "Vladimir Vassilievitch!"

Sletkin made her a sign with his hand.

"Martin Petrovitch is clothed and cared for, and eats what we do. What more does he want? He declared himself that he wanted nothing more in this world but to think of his soul. If only he would realise that everything now, however you look at it, is ours. He says too that we don't pay him his allowance. But we've not always got money ourselves; and what does he want with it, when he has everything provided him? And we treat him as one of the family too. I'm telling you the truth. The rooms, for instance, which he occupies—how we need them! there's simply not room to turn round without them; but we don't say a word

—we put up with it. We even think how to provide amusement for him. There, on St. Peter's Day, I bought him some excellent hooks in the town—real English ones, expensive hooks, to catch fish. There are lots of carp in our pond. Let him sit and fish; in an hour or two, there'd be a nice little fish soup provided. The most suitable occupation for old men."

"Vladimir Vassilievitch!" Evlampia called for the third time in an incisive tone, and she flung far away from her the grass she had been twisting in her fingers, "I am going!" Her eyes met mine. "I am going, Vladimir Vassilievitch!" she repeated, and vanished behind a bush.

"I'm coming, Evlampia Martinovna, directly!" shouted Sletkin. "Martin Petrovitch himself agrees with us now," he went on, turning again to me. "At first he was offended, certainly, and even grumbled, until, you know, he realised; he was, you remember, a hot-tempered, violent man—more's the pity! but there, he's grown quite meek now. Because he sees his own interest. Your mamma—mercy on us! how she pitched into me! . . . To be sure: she's a lady that sets as much store by her own authority as Martin Petrovitch used to do. But you come in and see for yourself. And you might put in a word when there's an opportunity. I feel Natalia Nikolaevna's bounty to me deeply. But we've got to live too."

"And how was it Zhitkov was refused?" I asked.

"Fedulitch? That dolt?" Sletkin shrugged his shoulders. "Why, upon my word, what use could he have been? His whole life spent among soldiers—and now he has a fancy to take up farming. He can keep the peasants up to the mark, says he, because he's been used to knocking men about. He can do nothing; even knocking men about wants some sense. Evlampia Martinovna refused him herself. He was a quite unsuitable person. All our farming would have gone to ruin with him!"

"Coo—y!" sounded Evlampia's musical voice.

"Coming! coming!" Sletkin called back. He held out his hand to me. Though unwillingly, I took it.

"I beg to take leave, Dmitri Semyonovitch," said Sletkin, showing all his white teeth. "Shoot wild snipe as much as you like. It's wild game, belonging to no one. But if you

come across a hare—you spare it; that game is ours. Oh, and something else! won't you be having pups from your bitch? I should be obliged for one!"

"Coo—y!" Evlampia's voice rang out again.

"Coo—y!" Sletkin responded, and rushed into the bushes.

XIX

I remember, when I was left alone, I was absorbed in wondering how it was Harlov had not pounded Sletkin "into a jelly", as he said, and how it was Sletkin had not been afraid of such a fate. It was clear Martin Petrovitch really had grown "meek", I thought, and I had a still stronger desire to make my way into Eskovo, and get at least a glance at that colossus, whom I could never picture to myself subdued and tractable. I had reached the edge of the copse, when suddenly a big snipe, with a great rush of wings, darted up at my very feet, and flew off into the depths of the wood. I took aim; my gun missed fire. I was greatly annoyed; it had been such a fine bird, and I made up my mind to try if I couldn't make it rise a second time. I set off in the direction of its flight, and going some two hundred paces off into the wood I caught sight—in a little glade, under an overhanging birch-tree—not of the snipe, but of the same Sletkin once more. He was lying on his back, with both hands under his head, and with a smile of contentment gazing upward at the sky, swinging his left leg, which was crossed over his right knee. He did not notice my approach. A few paces from him, Evlampia was walking slowly up and down the little glade, with downcast eyes. It seemed as though she were looking for something in the grass—mushrooms or something; now and then she stooped and stretched out her hand. She was singing in a low voice. I stopped at once, and fell to listening. At first I could not make out what it was she was singing, but afterward I recognised clearly the following well-known lines of the old ballad:

"Hither, hither, threatening storm-cloud,
Slay for me the father-in-law,
Strike for me the mother-in-law,
The young wife I will kill myself!"

Evlampia sang louder and louder; the last words she delivered with peculiar energy. Sletkin still lay on his back and laughed to himself, while she seemed all the time to be moving round and round him.

"Oh, indeed!" he commented at last. "The things that come into some people's heads!"

"What?" queried Evlampia.

Sletkin raised his head a little. "What? Why, what words were those you were uttering?"

"Why, you know, Volodya, one can't leave the words out of a song," answered Evlampia, and she turned and saw me. We both cried out aloud at once, and both rushed away in opposite directions.

I made my way hurriedly out of the copse, and crossing a narrow clearing, found myself facing Harlov's garden.

XX

I had no time, nor would it have been of any use, to deliberate over what I had seen. Only an expression kept recurring to my mind, "love-spell", which I had lately heard, and over the signification of which I had pondered a good deal. I walked alongside the garden fence, and in a few moments, behind the silver poplars (they had not yet lost a single leaf, and the foliage was luxuriantly thick and brilliantly glistening), I saw the yard and two little lodges of Martin Petrovitch's homestead. The whole place struck me as having been tidied up and pulled into shape. On every side one could perceive traces of unflagging and severe supervision. Anna Martinovna came out on to the steps, and screwing up her blue-gray eyes, gazed for a long while in the direction of the copse.

"Have you seen the master?" she asked a peasant, who was walking across the yard.

"Vladimir Vassilievitch?" responded the latter, taking his cap off. "He went into the copse, surely."

"I know, he went to the copse. Hasn't he come back? Haven't you seen him?"

"I've not seen him . . . nay."

The peasant continued standing bareheaded before Anna Martinovna.

"Well, you can go," she said. "Or no—wait a bit—where's Martin Petrovitch? Do you know?"

"Oh, Martin Petrovitch," answered the peasant, in a sing-song voice, alternately lifting his right and then his left hand, as though pointing away somewhere, "is sitting yonder, at the pond, with a fishing-rod. He's sitting in the reeds, with a rod. Catching fish, maybe, God knows."

"Very well . . . you can go," repeated Anna Martinovna; "and put away that wheel, it's lying about."

The peasant ran to carry out her command, while she remained standing a few minutes longer on the steps, still gazing in the direction of the copse. Then she clenched one fist menacingly, and went slowly back into the house. "Axiutka!" I heard her imperious voice calling within.

Anna Martinovna looked angry, and tightened her lips, thin enough at all times, with a sort of special energy. She was carelessly dressed, and a coil of loose hair had fallen down on to her shoulder. But in spite of the negligence of her attire, and her irritable humour, she struck me, just as before, as attractive, and I should have been delighted to kiss the narrow hand which looked malignant too, as she twice irritably pushed back the loose tress.

XXI

"Can Martin Petrovitch have really taken to fishing?" I asked myself, as I turned towards the pond, which was on one side of the garden. I got on to the dam, looked in all directions. . . . Martin Petrovitch was nowhere to be seen. I bent my steps along one of the banks of the pond, and at last, at the very top of it, in a little creek, in the midst of flat broken-down stalks of reddish reed, I caught sight of a huge grayish mass. . . . I looked intently: it was Harlov. Bareheaded, unkempt, in a cotton smock torn at the seams, with his legs crossed under him, he was sitting motionless on the bare earth. So motionless was he that a sandpiper, at my approach, darted up from the dry mud a couple of paces from him, and flew with a flash of its little wings and a whistle over the surface of the water, showing that no one had moved to frighten him for a long while. Harlov's whole appearance was so extraordinary that my dog stopped short

directly it saw him, lifted its tail, and growled. He turned his head a very little, and fixed his wild-looking eyes on me and my dog. He was greatly changed by his beard, though it was short, but thick and curly, in white tufts, like Astrachan fur. In his right hand lay the end of a rod, while the other end hovered feebly over the water. I felt an involuntary pang at my heart. I plucked up my spirits, however, went up to him, and wished him good morning. He slowly blinked as though just awake.

"What are you doing, Martin Petrovitch," I began; "catching fish here?"

"Yes . . . fish," he answered huskily, and pulled up the rod, on which there fluttered a piece of line, a fathom length, with no hook on it.

"Your tackle is broken off," I observed, and noticed the same moment that there was no sign of bait-tin nor worms near Martin Petrovitch. . . . And what sort of fishing could there be in September?

"Broken off?" he said, and he passed his hand over his face. "But it's all the same!"

He dropped the rod in again.

"Natalia Nikolaevna's son?" he asked me, after the lapse of two minutes, during which I had been gazing at him with secret bewilderment. Though he had grown terribly thinner, still he seemed a giant. But what rags he was dressed in, and how utterly he had gone to pieces altogether!

"Yes," I answered, "I'm the son of Natalia Nikolaevna B."

"Is she well?"

"My mother is quite well. She was very much hurt at your refusal," I added; "she did not at all expect you would not wish to come and see her."

Martin Petrovitch's head sank on his breast. "Have you been there?" he asked, with a motion of his head.

"Where?"

"There, at the house. Haven't you? Go! What is there for you to do here? Go! It's useless talking to me. I don't like it."

He was silent for a while.

"You'd like to be always idling about with a gun! In my young days I used to be inclined the same way too.

Only my father was strict and made me respect him too. Mind you, very different from fathers nowadays. My father flogged me with a horsewhip, and that was the end of it! I'd to give up idling about! And so I respected him. . . . Oo! . . . Yes! . . ."

Harlov paused again.

"Don't you stop here," he began again. "You go along to the house. Things are managed there now—it's first-rate. Volodka" . . . Here he faltered for a second. "Our Volodka's a good hand at everything. He's a fine fellow! yes, indeed, and a fine scoundrel too!"

I did not know what to say; Martin Petrovitch spoke very tranquilly.

"And you go and see my daughters. You remember, I daresay, I had daughters. They're managers too . . . . clever ones. But I'm growing old, my lad; I'm on the shelf. Time to repose, you know. . . ."

"Nice sort of repose!" I thought, glancing round. "Martin Petrovitch!" I uttered aloud, "you really must come and see us."

Harlov looked at me. "Go along, my lad, I tell you."

"Don't hurt mamma's feelings; come and see us."

"Go away, my lad, go away," persisted Harlov. "What do you want to talk to me for?"

"If you have no carriage, mamma will send you hers."

"Go along!"

"But, really and truly, Martin Petrovitch!"

Harlov looked down again, and I fancied that his cheeks, dingy as though covered with earth, faintly flushed.

"Really, do come," I went on. "What's the use of your sitting here? of your making yourself miserable?"

"Making myself miserable?" he commented hesitatingly.

"Yes, to be sure—making yourself miserable!" I repeated.

Harlov said nothing, and seemed lost in musing. Emboldened by his silence, I determined to be open, to act straightforwardly, bluntly. (Do not forget, I was only fifteen then.)

"Martin Petrovitch!" I began, seating myself beside him. "I know everything, you see, positively everything. I know how your son-in-law is treating you—doubtless with the con-

sent of your daughters. And now you are in such a position . . . But why lose heart?"

Harlov still remained silent, and simply dropped in his line; while I—what a sensible fellow, what a sage I felt!

"Doubtless," I began again, "you acted imprudently in giving up everything to your daughters. It was most generous on your part, and I am not going to blame you. In our days it is a quality only too rare. But since your daughters are so ungrateful, you ought to show a contempt—yes, a contempt—for them . . . and not fret——"

"Stop!" muttered Harlov suddenly, gnashing his teeth, and his eyes, staring at the pond, glittered wrathfully . . . "Go away!"

"But, Martin Petrovitch——"

"Go away, I tell you . . . or I'll kill you!"

I had come quite close to him; but at the last words I instinctively jumped up. "What did you say, Martin Petrovitch?"

"I'll kill you, I tell you; go away!" With a wild moan, a roar, the words broke from Harlov's breast, but he did not turn his head, and still stared wrathfully straight in front of him. "I'll take you and fling you and your fool's counsel into the water. You shall learn to pester the old, little mosop!"

"He's gone mad!" flashed through my mind.

I looked at him more attentively, and was completely petrified; Martin Petrovitch was weeping! Tear after tear rolled from his eyelashes down his cheeks . . . while his face had assumed an expression utterly savage.

"Go away!" he roared once more, "or I'll kill you, by God! for an example to others!"

He was shaking all over from side to side, and showing his teeth like a wild boar. I snatched up my gun and took to my heels. My dog flew after me, barking. He, too, was frightened.

When I got home, I naturally did not, by so much as a word, to my mother, hint at what I had seen; but coming across Souvenir, I told him—the devil knows why—all about it. That loathsome person was so delighted at my story, shrieking with laughter, and even dancing with pleasure, that I could hardly forbear striking him.

"Ah! I should like," he kept repeating breathless with laughter, "to see that fiend, the Swede, Harlov, crawling into the mud and sitting in it. . . ."

"Go over to the pond if you're so curious."

"Yes; but how if he kills me?"

I felt horribly sick at Souvenir, and regretted my ill-timed confidence. . . . Zhitkov, to whom he repeated my tale, looked at the matter somewhat differently.

"We shall have to call in the police," he concluded, "or, maybe, we may have to send for a battalion of military."

His forebodings with regard to the military battalion did not come true; but something extraordinary really did happen.

XXII

In the middle of October, three weeks after my interview with Martin Petrovitch, I was standing at the window of my own room in the second story of our house, and thinking of nothing at all, I looked disconsolately into the yard and the road that lay beyond it. The weather had been disgusting for the last five days. Shooting was not even to be thought of. All things living had hidden themselves; even the sparrows made no sound, and the rooks had long ago disappeared from sight. The wind howled drearily, then whistled spasmodically. The low-hanging sky, unbroken by one streak of light, had changed from an unpleasant whitish to a leaden and still more sinister hue; and the rain, which had been pouring and pouring, mercilessly and unceasingly, had suddenly become still more violent and more driving, and streamed with a rushing sound over the panes. The trees had been stripped utterly bare, and turned a sort of gray. It seemed they had nothing left to plunder; yet the wind would not be denied, but set to harassing them once more. Puddles, clogged with dead leaves, stood everywhere. Big bubbles, continually bursting and rising up again, leaped and glided over them. Along the roads the mud lay thick and impassable. The cold pierced its way indoors through one's clothes to the very bones. An involuntary shiver passed over the body, and how sick one felt at heart! Sick, precisely, not sad. It seemed there would never again in the world be sunshine, nor brightness, nor colour, but this rain

and mire and gray damp, and raw fog would last forever, and forever would the wind whine and moan! Well, I was standing moodily at my window, and I remember a sudden darkness came on—a bluish darkness—though the clock only pointed to twelve. Suddenly I fancied I saw a bear dash across our yard from the gates to the steps. Not on all fours, certainly, but as he is depicted when he gets up on his hind paws. I could not believe my eyes. If it were not a bear I had seen, it was, anyway, something enormous, black, shaggy. . . . I was still lost in wonder as to what it could be, when suddenly I heard below a furious knocking. It seemed something utterly unlooked for, something terrible was stumbling headlong into our house. Then began a commotion, a hurrying to and fro. . . .

I quickly went down the stairs, ran into the dining-room. . . .

At the drawing-room door facing me stood my mother, as though rooted to the spot. Behind her peered several scared female faces. The butler, two footmen, and a page, with his mouth wide open with astonishment, were packed together in the doorway of the hall. In the middle of the dining-room, covered with mire, dishevelled, tattered, and soaking wet—so wet that steam rose all round and water was running in little streams over the floor—knelt, shaking ponderously, as it were, at the last gasp . . . the very monster I had seen dashing across the yard! And who was this monster? Harlov! I came up on one side, and saw, not his face, but his head, which he was clutching, with both hands in the hair that blinded him with filth. He was breathing heavily, brokenly; something positively rattled in his throat—and in all the bespattered dark mass, the only thing that could be clearly distinguished was the tiny whites of the eyes, straying wildly about. He was awful! The dignitary came into my mind whom he had once crushed for comparing him to a mastodon. Truly, so might have looked some antediluvian creature that had just escaped another more powerful monster, attacking it in the eternal slime of the primeval swamps.

"Martin Petrovitch!" my mother cried at last, and she clasped her hands. "Is that you? Good God! Merciful heavens!"

"I . . . I . . ." we heard a broken voice, which seemed

with effort and painfully to dwell on each sound. "Alas! It is I!"

"But what has happened to you? Mercy upon us!"

"Natalia Nikolaev . . . na . . . I have . . . run straight to you . . . from home . . . on foot . . ."

"Through such mud! But you don't look like a man. Get up; sit down, anyway. . . . And you," she turned to the maidservants, "run quick for cloths. And haven't you some dry clothes?" she asked the butler.

The butler gesticulated as though to say: Is it likely for such a size? . . . "But we could get a coverlet," he replied, "or, there's a new horse-rug."

"But get up, get up, Martin Petrovitch, sit down," repeated my mother.

"They've turned me out, madam," Harlov moaned suddenly, and he flung his head back and stretched his hands out before him. "They've turned me out, Natalia Nikolaevna! My own daughters, out of my own home . . ."

My mother sighed and groaned.

"What are you saying? Turned you out! What wickedness! what wickedness! [She crossed herself.] But do get up, Martin Petrovitch, I beg you!"

Two maidservants came in with cloths and stood still before Harlov. It was clear they did not know how to attack this mountain of filth. "They have turned me out, madam, they have turned me out!" Harlov kept repeating meanwhile. The butler returned with a large woollen coverlet, and he, too, stood still in perplexity. Souvenir's little head was thrust in at a door and vanished again.

"Martin Petrovitch! Get up! Sit down! and tell me everything properly," my mother commanded in a tone of determination.

Harlov rose. . . . The butler tried to assist him but only dirtied his hand, and, shaking his fingers, retreated to the door. Staggering and faltering, Harlov got to a chair and sat down. The maids again approached him with their cloths, but he waved them off with his hand, and refused the coverlet. My mother did not herself, indeed, insist; to dry Harlov was obviously out of the question; they contented themselves with hastily wiping up his traces on the floor.

XXIII

"How have they turned you out?" my mother asked, as soon as he had a little time to recover himself.

"Madam! Natalia Nikolaevna!" he began, in a strained voice—and again I was struck by the uneasy straying of his eyes: "I will tell you the truth; I am myself most of all to blame."

"Ay, to be sure; you would not listen to me at the time," assented my mother, sinking into an arm-chair and slightly moving a scented handkerchief before her nose; very strong was the smell that came from Harlov . . . the odour in a forest bog is not so strong.

"Alas! that's not where I erred, madam, but through pride. Pride has been my ruin, as it ruined the Czar Navuhodonosor. I fancied God had given me my full share of sense, and if I resolved on anything, it followed it was right; so . . . and then the fear of death came . . . I was utterly confounded! 'I'll show,' said I, 'to the last, my power and my strength! I'll bestow all on them—and they must feel it all their lives.' . . . [Harlov suddenly was shaking all over. . . .] Like a mangy dog they have driven me out of the house! This is their gratitude!"

"In what way——" my mother was beginning.

"They took my page, Maximka, from me," Harlov interrupted her [his eyes were still wandering, he held both hands —the fingers interlaced—under his chin], "my carriage they took away, my monthly allowance they cut down, did not pay me the sum specified, cut me short all round, in fact; still I said nothing, bore it all! And I bore it by reason . . . alas! of my pride again. That my cruel enemies might not say: 'See, the old fool's sorry for it now'; and you too, do you remember, madam, had warned me; 'mind you, it's all to no purpose,' you said; and so I bore it. . . . Only, to-day I came into my room, and it was occupied already, and my bed they'd thrown out into the lumber-room! 'You can sleep there; we put up with you there even only out of charity; we've need of your room for the household.' And this was said to me by whom? Volodka Sletkin! the vile hound, the base cur!"

Harlov's voice broke.

"But your daughters? What did they do?" asked my mother.

"But I bore it all," Harlov went on again; "bitterness, bitterness was in my heart, let me tell you, and shame. . . . I could not bear to look upon the light of day! That was why I was unwilling to come and see you, ma'am, from this same feeling, from shame for my disgrace! I have tried everything, my good friend; kindness, affection, and threats, and I reasoned with them, and more besides! I bowed down before them . . . like this. [Harlov showed how he had bowed down.] And all in vain. And all of it I bore! At the beginning, at first, I'd very different thoughts; I'll up, I thought, and kill them. I'll crush them all, so that not a trace remains of them! . . . I'll let them know! Well, but after, I submitted! It's a cross, I thought, laid upon me; it's to bid me make ready for death. And all at once, to-day, driven out, like a cur! And by whom? Volodka! And you asked about my daughters; they've no will of their own at all. They're Volodka's slaves! Yes!"

My mother wondered. "In Anna's case I can understand that; she's a wife. . . . But how comes it your second . . ."

"Evlampia? She's worse than Anna! She's altogether given herself up into Volodka's hands. That's the reason she refused your soldier, too. At his, at Volodka's bidding. Anna, to be sure, ought to resent it, and she can't bear her sister, but she submits! He's bewitched them, the cursed scoundrel! Though she, Anna, I daresay, is pleased to think that Evlampia, who was always so proud—and now see what she's come to! . . . O . . . alas! . . . alas! God, my God!"

My mother looked uneasily towards me. I moved a little away as a precautionary measure, for fear I should be sent away altogether. . . .

"I am very sorry indeed, Martin Petrovitch," she began, "that my former protégé has caused you so much sorrow, and has turned out so badly. But I, too, was mistaken in him. . . . Who could have expected this of him?"

"Madam," Harlov moaned out, and he struck himself a blow on the chest, "I cannot bear the ingratitude of my daughters! I cannot, madam! You know I gave them everything, everything! And besides, my conscience has been

tormenting me. Many things . . . alas! many things I have thought over, sitting by the pond, fishing. 'If you'd only done good to any one in your life!' was what I pondered upon, 'succoured the poor, set the peasants free, or something, to atone for having wrung their lives out of them. You must answer for them before God! Now their tears are revenged.' And what sort of life have they now? It was a deep pit even in my time—why disguise my sins?—but now there's no seeing the bottom! All these sins I have taken upon my soul; I have sacrificed my conscience for my children, and for this I'm laughed to scorn! Kicked out of the house, like a cur!"

"Don't think about that, Martin Petrovitch," observed my mother.

"And when he told me, your Volodka," Harlov went on with fresh force, "when he told me I was not to live in my room any more—I laid every plank in that room with my own hands—when he said that to me—God only knows what passed within me! It was all confusion in my head, and like a knife in my heart. . . . Either to cut his throat or get away out of the house! . . . So, I have run to you, my benefactress, Natalia Nikolaevna . . . where had I to lay my head? And then the rain, the filth . . . I fell down twenty times, maybe! And now . . . in such unseemly . . ."

Harlov scanned himself and moved restlessly in his chair, as though intending to get up.

"Say no more, Martin Petrovitch," my mother interposed hurriedly; "what does that signify? That you've made the floor dirty? That's no great matter! Come, I want to make you a proposition. Listen! They shall take you now to a special room, and make you up a clean bed—you undress, wash, and lie down and sleep a little. . . ."

"Natalia Nikolaevna! There's no sleeping for me!" Harlov responded drearily. "It's as though there were hammers beating in my brain! Me! like some good-for-nothing beast! . . ."

"Lie down and sleep," my mother repeated insistently. "And then we'll give you some tea—yes, and we'll have a talk. Don't lose heart, old friend. If they've driven you out of *your* house, in *my* house you will always find a home. . . . I have not forgotten, you know, that you saved my life."

"Benefactress!" moaned Harlov, and he covered his face with his hand. "*You* must save me now!"

This appeal touched my mother almost to tears. "I am ready and eager to help you, Martin Petrovitch, in everything I am able. But you must promise me that you will listen to me in future and dismiss every evil thought from you."

Harlov took his hands from his face. "If need be," he said, "I can forgive them, even!"

My mother nodded her head approvingly. "I am very glad to see you in such a truly Christian frame of mind, Martin Petrovitch; but we will talk of that later. Meanwhile, you put yourself to rights, and, most of all, sleep.—Take Martin Petrovitch to what was the master's room, the green room," said my mother, addressing the butler, "and whatever he asks for, let him have it on the spot! Give orders for his clothes to be dried and washed, and ask the housekeeper for what linen is needed. Do you hear?"

"Yes, madam," responded the butler.

"And as soon as he's asleep, tell the tailor to take his measure; and his beard will have to be shaved: Not at once, but after."

"Yes, madam," repeated the butler.—"Martin Petrovitch, kindly come." Harlov got up, looked at my mother, was about to go up to her, but stopped, swinging a bow from the waist, crossed himself three times to the image, and followed the steward. Behind him, I, too, slipped out of the room.

XXIV

The butler conducted Harlov to the green room, and at once ran off for the ward-room maid, as it turned out there were no sheets on the bed. Souvenir, who met us in the passage, and popped into the green room with us, promptly proceeded to dance, grinning and chuckling, round Harlov, who stood, his arms held a little away from him, and his legs apart, in the middle of the room, seeming lost in thought. The water was still dripping from him.

"The Swede! The Swede, Harlus!" piped Souvenir, doubling up and holding his sides. "Mighty founder of the illustrious race of Harlovs, look down on my descendant! What does he look like? Dost thou recognise him? Ha, ha,

ha! Your excellency, your hand, I beg; why, have you got on black gloves?"

I tried to restrain Souvenir, to put him to shame . . . but it was too late for that now.

"He called me parasite, toady! 'You've no roof,' said he, 'to call your own.' But now, no doubt about it, he's become as dependent as poor little me. Martin Petrovitch and Souvenir, the poor toady, are equal now. He'll have to live on charity too. They'll toss him the stale and dirty crust, that the dog has sniffed at and refused. . . . And they'll tell him to eat it, too. Ha, ha, ha!"

Harlov still stood motionless, his head drawn in, his legs and arms held a little apart.

"Martin Harlov, a nobleman born!" Souvenir went on shrieking. "What airs he used to give himself. 'Just look at me! Don't come near, or I'll knock you down!' . . . And when he was so clever as to give away and divide his property, didn't he crow! 'Gratitude!' he cackled, 'gratitude!' But why were you so mean to me? Why didn't you make me a present? Maybe, I should have felt it more. And you see I was right when I said they'd strip you bare, and . . ."

"Souvenir!" I screamed; but Souvenir was in nowise daunted. Harlov still did not stir. It seemed as though he were only now beginning to be aware how soaking-wet everything was that he had on, and was waiting to be helped off with his clothes. But the butler had not come back.

"And a military man too!" Souvenir began again. "In the year twelve, he saved his country; he showed proofs of his valour. I see how it is. Stripping the frozen marauders of their breeches is work he's quite equal to, but when the hussies stamp their feet at him he's frightened out of his skin."

"Souvenir!" I screamed a second time.

Harlov looked askance at Souvenir. Till that instant he seemed not to have noticed his presence, and only my exclamation aroused his attention.

"Look out, brother," he growled huskily, "don't dance yourself into trouble."

Souvenir fairly rolled about with laughter. "Ah, how you frighten me, most honoured brother. You're a formi-

dable person, to be sure. You must comb your hair, at any rate, or, God forbid, it'll get dry, and you'll never wash it clean again; you'll have to mow it with a sickle." Souvenir all of a sudden got into a fury. "And you give yourself airs still. A poor outcast, and he gives himself airs. Where's your home now? you'd better tell me that, you were always boasting of it. 'I have a home of my own,' he used to say, but you're homeless. 'My ancestral roof,' he would say." Souvenir pounced on this phrase as an inspiration.

"Mr. Bitchkov," I protested, "what are you about? you forget yourself."

But he still persisted in chattering, and still danced and pranced up and down quite close to Harlov. And still the butler and the ward-room maid did not come.

I felt alarmed. I began to notice that Harlov, who had, during his conversation with my mother, gradually grown quieter, and even towards the end apparently resigned himself to his fate, was beginning to get worked up again. He breathed more hurriedly, it seemed as though his face were suddenly swollen under his ears, his fingers twitched, his eyes again began moving restlessly in the dark mask of his grim face. . . .

"Souvenir, Souvenir!" I cried. "Stop it, I'll tell mamma."

But Souvenir seemed possessed by frenzy. "Yes, yes, most honoured brother," he began again, "here we find ourselves, you and I, in the most delicate position, while your daughters, with your son-in-law, Vladimir Vassilievitch, are having a fine laugh at you under your roof. And you should at least curse them, as you promised. Even that you're not equal to. To be sure, how could you hold your own with Vladimir Vassilievitch? Why, you used to call him Volodka, too. You call him Volodka. He is Vladimir Vassilievitch, Mr. Sletkin, a landowner, a gentleman, while—what are you, pray?"

A furious roar drowned Souvenir's words. . . . Harlov was aroused. His fists were clenched and lifted, his face was purple, there was foam on his drawn lips, he was shaking with rage. "Roof, you say!" he thundered in his iron voice; "curse, you say. . . . No! I will not curse them. . . . They don't care for that . . . But the roof . . . I will tear the roof

off them, and they shall have no roof over their heads, like me. They shall learn to know Martin Harlov. My strength is not all gone yet; they shall learn to laugh at me! . . . They shall have no roof over their heads!"

I was stupefied; never in my life had I witnessed such boundless anger. Not a man—a wild beast paced to and fro before me. I was stupefied; . . . as for Souvenir, he had hidden under the table in his fright.

"They shall not!" Harlov shouted for the last time, and almost knocking over the butler and the ward-room maid, he rushed away out of the house. . . . He dashed headlong across the yard, and vanished through the gates.

XXV

My mother was terribly angry when the butler came with an abashed countenance to report Martin Petrovitch's sudden and unexpected retreat. He did not dare to conceal the cause of this retreat; I was obliged to confirm his story. "Then it was all your doing!" my mother cried at the sight of Souvenir, who had run in like a hare, and was even approaching to kiss her hand: "Your vile tongue is to blame for it all!" "Excuse me, d'rectly, d'rectly . . ." faltered Souvenir, stuttering and drawing back his elbows behind him. "D'rectly . . . d'rectly . . . I know your 'd'rectly,'" my mother repeated reprovingly, and she sent him out of the room. Then she rang the bell, sent for Kvitsinsky, and gave him orders to set off on the spot to Eskovo, with a carriage, to find Martin Petrovitch at all costs, and to bring him back. "Do not let me see you without him," she concluded. The gloomy Pole bowed his head without a word, and went away.

I went back to my own room, sat down again at the window, and I pondered a long while, I remember, on what had taken place before my eyes. I was puzzled; I could not understand how it was that Harlov, who had endured the insults of his own family almost without a murmur, had lost all self-control, and been unable to put up with the jeers and pin-pricks of such an abject creature as Souvenir. I did not understand in those days what insufferable bitterness there may sometimes be in a foolish taunt, even when it comes from lips one scorns. . . . The hated name of Sletkin, uttered

by Souvenir, had been like a spark thrown into powder. The sore spot could not endure this final prick.

About an hour passed by. Our coach drove into the yard; but our steward sat in it alone. And my mother had said to him: "Don't let me see you without him." Kvitsinsky jumped hurriedly out of the carriage, and ran up the steps. His face had a perturbed look—something very unusual with him. I promptly rushed down-stairs, and followed at his heels into the drawing-room. "Well? have you brought him?" asked my mother.

"I have not brought him," answered Kvitsinsky—"and I could not bring him."

"How's that? Have you seen him?"

"Yes."

"What has happened to him? A fit?"

"No; nothing has happened."

"How is it you didn't bring him?"

"He's pulling his house to pieces."

"What?"

"He's standing on the roof of the new building, and pulling it to pieces. Forty boards or more, I should guess, must have come down by now, and some five of the rafters too. ["They shall not have a roof over their heads." Harlov's words came back to me.]"

My mother stared at Kvitsinsky. "Alone . . . he's standing on the roof, and pulling the roof down?"

"Exactly so. He is walking about on the flooring of the garret in the roof, and smashing right and left of him. His strength, you are aware, madam, is superhuman. And the roof too, one must say, is a poor affair; half-inch deal battens, laid wide apart, one-inch nails."

My mother looked at me, as though wishing to make sure whether she had heard aright. "Half-inches wide apart," she repeated, obviously not understanding the meaning of one word. "Well, what then?" she said at last.

"I have come for instructions. There's no doing anything without men to help. The peasants there are all limp with fright."

"And his daughters—what of them?"

"His daughters are doing nothing. They're running to and fro, shouting . . . this and that . . . all to no purpose."

"And is Sletkin there?"

"He's there too. He's making more outcry than all of ıem—but he can't do anything."

"And Martin Petrovitch is standing on the roof?"

"On the roof . . . that is, in the garret—and pulling the ɔof to pieces."

"Yes, yes," said my mother, "half-inches wide apart."

The position was obviously a serious one. What steps ere to be taken? Send to the town for the police captain? ıet together the peasants? My mother was quite at her wit's nd. Zhitkov, who had come into dinner, was nonplussed ɔo. It is true, he made another reference to a battalion of ıilitary; he offered no advice, however, but confined himself ɔ looking submissive and devoted. Kvitsinsky, seeing he ould not get at any instructions, suggested to my mother—ith the contemptuous respectfulness peculiar to him—that she would authorise him to take a few of the stable-boys, ardeners, and other house-serfs, he would make an effort . . .

"Yes, yes," my mother cut him short, "do make an effort, ear Vikenty Osipitch! Only make haste, please, and I will ıke all responsibility on myself."

Kvitsinsky smiled coldly. "One thing let me make clear, ıadam, beforehand; it's impossible to reckon on any result, ɛeing that Mr. Harlov's strength is so great, and he is ɔ desperate too; he feels himself to have been very cruelly ronged!"

"Yes, yes," my mother assented; "and it's all that vile ouvenir's fault! Never will I forgive him for it. Go and ıke the servants and set off, Vikenty Osipitch!"

"You'd better take plenty of cord, Mr. Steward, and some re-escape tackle," Zhitkov brought out in his bass—"and there is such a thing as a net, it would be as well to take ıat along too. We once had in our regiment . . ."

"Kindly refrain from instructing me, sir," Kvitsinsky cut im short, with an air of vexation; "I know what is needed ithout your aid."

Zhitkov was offended, and protested that as he imagined e, too, was called upon . . .

"No, no!" interposed my mother; "you'd better stop here you are . . . Let Vikenty Osipitch act alone . . . Take haste, Vikenty Osipitch!"

Zhitkov was still more offended, while Kvitsinsky bowed and went out.

I rushed off to the stable, hurriedly saddled my horse myself, and set off at a gallop along the road to Eskovo.

XXVI

The rain had ceased, but the wind was blowing with redoubled force—straight into my face. Half-way there, the saddle almost slipped round under me; the girth had got loose. I got off and tried to tighten the straps with my teeth. . . . All at once I heard some one calling me by my name. . . . Souvenir was running towards me across the green fields. "What!" he shouted to me from some way off, "was your curiosity too much for you? But it's no use . . . I went over there, straight, at Harlov's heels. . . . Such a state of things you never saw in your life!"

"You want to enjoy what you have done," I said indignantly, and, jumping on my horse, I set off again at a gallop. But the indefatigable Souvenir did not give me up, and chuckled and grinned, even as he ran. At last, Eskovo was reached—there was the dam, and there the long hedge and willow-tree of the homestead. . . . I rode up to the gate, dismounted, tied up my horse, and stood still in amazement.

Of one-third of the roof of the newer house, of the front part, nothing was left but the skeleton; boards and litter lay in disorderly heaps on the ground on both sides of the building. Even supposing the roof to be, as Kvitsinsky had said, a poor affair, even so, it was something incredible! On the floor of the garret, in a whirl of dust and rubbish, a blackish gray mass was moving to and fro with rapid ungainly action, at one moment shaking the remaining chimney, built of brick (the other had fallen already), then tearing up the boarding and flinging it down below, then clutching at the very rafters. It was Harlov. He struck me as being exactly like a bear at this moment too; the head, and back, and shoulders were a bear's, and he put his feet down wide apart without bending the insteps—also like a bear. The bitter wind was blowing upon him from every side, lifting his matted locks. It was horrible to see, here and there, red patches of bare flesh through the rents in his tattered clothes; it was horrible to

hear his wild husky muttering. There were a lot of people in the yard; peasant-women, boys, and servant-girls stood close along the hedge. A few peasants huddled together in a separate group, a little way off. The old village priest, whom I knew, was standing, bareheaded, on the steps of the other house, and holding a brazen cross in both hands, from time to time, silently and hopelessly, raised it, and, as it were, showed it to Harlov. Beside the priest stood Evlampia with her back against the wall, gazing fixedly at her father. Anna, at one moment, pushed her head out of the little window, then vanished, then hurried into the yard, then went back into the house. Sletkin—pale all over, livid—in an old dressing-gown and smoking-cap, with a single-barrelled rifle in his hands, kept running to and fro with little steps. He had completely *gone Jewish,* as it is called. He was gasping, threatening, shaking, pointing the gun at Harlov, then letting it drop back on his shoulder—pointing it again, shrieking, weeping. . . . On seeing Souvenir and me he simply flew to us.

"Look, look, what is going on here!" he wailed—"look! He's gone out of his mind, he's raving mad . . . and see what he's doing! I've sent for the police already—but no one comes! No one comes! If I do fire at him, the law couldn't touch me, for every man has a right to defend his own property! And I will fire! . . . By God, I'll fire!"

He ran off towards the house.

"Martin Petrovitch, look out! If you don't get down, I'll fire!"

"Fire away!" came a husky voice from the roof. "Fire away! And meanwhile here's a little present for you!"

A long plank flew up, and, turning over twice in the air, came violently to the earth, just at Sletkin's feet. He positively jumped into the air, while Harlov chuckled.

"Merciful Jesus!" faltered some one behind me. I looked round: Souvenir. "Ah!" I thought, "he's left off laughing now!"

Sletkin clutched a peasant, who was standing near, by the collar.

"Climb up now, climb up, climb up, all of you, you devils," he wailed, shaking the man with all his force, "save my property!"

The peasant took a couple of steps forward, threw his head back, waved his arms, shouted "Hi! here! master!" shifted from one foot to the other uneasily, and then turned back.

"A ladder! bring a ladder!" Sletkin addressed the other peasants.

"Where are we to get it?" was heard in answer.

"And if we had a ladder," one voice pronounced deliberately, "who'd care to climb up? Not such fools! He'd wring your neck for you—in a twinkling!"

"He'd kill one in no time," said one young lad with flaxen hair and a half-idiotic face.

"To be sure he would," the others confirmed. It struck me that, even if there had been no obvious danger, the peasants would yet have been loath to carry out their new owner's orders. They almost approved of Harlov, though they were amazed at him.

"Ugh, you robbers!" moaned Sletkin; "you shall all catch it . . ."

But at this moment, with a heavy rumble, the last chimney came crashing down, and, in the midst of the cloud of yellow dust that flew up instantly, Harlov—uttering a piercing shriek and lifting his bleeding hands high in the air—turned facing us. Sletkin pointed the gun at him again.

Evlampia pulled him back by the elbow.

"Don't interfere!" he snarled savagely at her.

"And you—don't you dare!" she answered; and her blue eyes flashed menacingly under her scowling brows. "Father's pulling his house down. It's his own."

"You lie: it's ours!"

"You say ours; but I say it's his."

Sletkin hissed with fury; Evlampia's eyes seemed stabbing him in the face.

"Ah, how d'ye do, my delightful daughter?" Harlov thundered from above. "How d'ye do, Evlampia Martinovna? How are you getting on with your sweetheart? Are your kisses sweet, and your fondling?"

"Father!" rang out Evlampia's musical voice.

"Eh, daughter?" answered Harlov; and he came down to the very edge of the wall. His face, as far as I could make it out, wore a strange smile, a bright, mirthful—and

for that very reason peculiarly strange and evil—smile. . . . Many years later I saw just the same smile on the face of a man condemned to death.

"Stop, father; come down. We are in fault; we give everything back to you. Come down."

"What do you mean by disposing of what's ours?" put in Sletkin. Evlampia merely scowled more angrily.

"I give you back my share. I give up everything. Give over, come down, father! Forgive us; forgive me."

Harlov still went on smiling. "It's too late, my darling," he said, and each of his words rang out like brass. "Too late your stony heart is touched! The rock's started rolling down-hill—there's no holding it back now! And don't look to me now; I'm a doomed man! You'd do better to look to your Volodka; see what a pretty fellow you've picked out! And look to your hellish sister; there's her foxy nose yonder thrust out of the window; she's peering yonder after that husband of hers! No, my good friends; you would rob me of a roof over my head, so I will leave you not one beam upon another! With my own hands I built it, with my own hands I destroy it—yes, with my hands alone! See, I've taken no axe to help me!"

He snorted at his two open hands, and clutched at the centre beam again.

"Enough, father," Evlampia was saying meanwhile, and her voice had grown marvellously caressing, "let bygones be bygones. Come, trust me; you always trusted me. Come, get down; come to me to my little room, to my soft bed. I will dry you and warm you; I will bind up your wounds; see, you have torn your hands. You shall live with me as in Christ's bosom; food shall be sweet to you—and sleep sweeter yet. Come, we have done wrong! yes, we were puffed up, we have sinned; come, forgive!"

Harlov shook his head. "Talk away! Me believe you! Never again! You've murdered all trust in my heart! You've murdered everything! I was an eagle, and became a worm for you . . . and you—would you even crush the worm? Have done! I loved you, you know very well—but now you are no daughter to me, and I'm no father to you . . . I'm a doomed man! Don't meddle! As for you, fire away, coward, mighty man of valour!" Harlov bellowed

suddenly at Sletkin. "Why is it you keep aiming and don't shoot? Are you mindful of the law; if the recipient of a gift commits an attempt upon the life of the giver," Harlov enunciated distinctly, "then the giver is empowered to claim everything back again? Ha, ha! don't be afraid, law-abiding man! I'd make no claims. I'll make an end of everything myself. . . . Here goes!"

"Father!" for the last time Evlampia besought him.

"Silence!"

"Martin Petrovitch! brother, be generous and forgive!" faltered Souvenir.

"Father! dear father!"

"Silence, bitch!" shouted Harlov. At Souvenir he did not even glance—he merely spat in his direction.

XXVII

At that instant, Kvitsinsky, with all his retinue—in three carts—appeared at the gates. The tired horses panted, the men jumped out, one after another, into the mud.

"Aha!" Harlov shouted at the top of his voice. "An army . . . here it comes, an army! A whole army they're sending against me! Capital! Only I give warning—if any one comes up here to me on the roof, I'll send him flying down, head over heels! I'm an inhospitable master; I don't like visitors at wrong times! No indeed!"

He was hanging with both hands on to the front rafters of the roof, the so-called standards of the gable, and beginning to shake them violently. Balancing on the edge of the garret flooring, he dragged them, as it were, after him, chanting rhythmically like a bargeman: "One more pull! one more! o-oh!"

Sletkin ran up to Kvitsinsky and was beginning to whimper and pour out complaints. . . . The latter begged him "not to interfere," and proceeded to carry out the plan he had evolved. He took up his position in front of the house, and began, by way of diversion, to explain to Harlov that what he was about was unworthy of his rank. . . .

"One more pull! one more!" chanted Harlov.

"That Natalia Nikolaevna was greatly displeased at his proceedings, and had not expected it of him. . . ."

"One more pull! one more! o-oh!" Harlov chanted . . . while, meantime, Kvitsinsky had despatched the four sturdiest and boldest of the stable-boys to the other side of the house to clamber up the roof from behind. Harlov, however, detected the plan of attack; he suddenly left the standards and ran quickly to the back part of the roof. His appearance was so alarming that the two stable-boys who had already got up to the garret dropped instantly back again to the ground by the water-pipe, to the great glee of the serf boys, who positively roared with laughter. Harlov shook his fist after them and, going back to the front part of the house, again clutched at the standards and began once more loosening them, singing again, like a bargeman.

Suddenly he stopped, stared. . . .

"Maximushka, my dear; my friend!" he cried; "is it you?"

I looked round. . . . There, actually, was Maximka, stepping out from the crowd of peasants. Grinning and showing his teeth, he walked forward. His master, the tailor, had probably let him come home for a holiday.

"Climb up to me, Maximushka, my faithful servant," Harlov went on; "together let us rid ourselves of evil Tartar folk, of Lithuanian thieves!"

Maximka, still grinning, promptly began climbing up the roof. . . . But they seized him and pulled him back—goodness knows why; possibly as an example to the rest; he could hardly have been much aid to Martin Petrovitch.

"Oh, all right! Good!" Harlov pronounced, in a voice of menace, and again he took hold of the standards.

"Vikenty Osipitch! with your permission, I'll shoot," Sletkin turned to Kvitsinsky; "more to frighten him, see, than anything; my gun's only charged with snipe-shot." But Kvitsinsky had not time to answer him, when the front couple of standards, viciously shaken in Harlov's iron hands, heeled over with a loud crack and crashed into the yard; and with it, not able to stop himself, came Harlov too, and fell with a heavy thud on the earth. Every one shuddered and drew a deep breath. . . . Harlov lay without stirring on his breast, and on his back lay the top central beam of the roof, which had come down with the falling gable's timbers.

XXVIII

They ran up to Harlov, rolled the beam off him, turned him over on his back. His face was lifeless, there was blood about his mouth; he did not seem to breathe. "The breath is gone out of him," muttered the peasants, standing about him. They ran to the well for water, brought a whole bucketful, and drenched Harlov's head. The mud and dust ran off his face, but he looked as lifeless as ever. They dragged up a bench, set it in the house itself, and with difficulty raising the huge body of Martin Petrovitch, laid it there with the head to the wall. The page Maximka approached, fell on one knee, and, his other leg stretched far behind him, in a theatrical way, supported his former master's arm. Evlampia, pale as death, stood directly facing her father, her great eyes fastened immovably upon him. Anna and Sletkin did not come near him. All were silent, all, as it were, waited for something. At last we heard broken, smacking noises in Harlov's throat, as though he were swallowing. . . . Then he feebly moved one, his right, hand (Maximka supported the left), opened one, the right, eye, and slowly gazing about him, as though drunken with some fearful drunkenness, groaned, articulated, stammering: "I'm sma-ashed" . . . and as though after a moment's thought, added, "here it is, the ra . . . aven co . . . olt!" The blood suddenly gushed thickly from his mouth . . . his whole body began to quiver. . . .

"The end!" I thought. . . . But once more Harlov opened the same eye (the left eyelid lay as motionless as on a dead man's face), and fixing it on Evlampia, he articulated, hardly above a breath: "Well, daugh . . . ter . . . you, I do not . . ."

Kvitsinsky, with a sharp motion of his hand, beckoned to the priest, who was still standing on the step. . . . The old man came up, his narrow cassock clinging about his feeble knees. But suddenly there was a sort of horrible twitching in Harlov's legs and in his stomach too; an irregular contraction passed upward over his face. Evlampia's face seemed quivering and working in the same way. Maximka began crossing himself. . . . I was seized with horror; I ran out

to the gates, squeezed myself close to them, not looking round. A minute later a soft murmur ran through the crowd, behind my back, and I understood that Martin Petrovitch was no more.

His skull had been fractured by the beam and his ribs injured, as it appeared at the post-mortem examination.

XXIX

What had he wanted to say to her as he lay dying? I asked myself as I went home on my cob: "I do not . . . forgive," or "do not . . . pardon." The rain had come on again, but I rode at a walking pace. I wanted to be alone as long as possible; I wanted to give myself up to my reflections, unchecked. Souvenir had gone back in one of the carts that had come with Kvitsinsky. Young and frivolous as I was at that time, the sudden sweeping change (not in mere details only) that is invariably called forth in all hearts by the coming of death—expected or unexpected, it makes no difference!—its majesty, its gravity, and its truthfulness could not fail to impress me. I was impressed too, . . . but for all that, my troubled, childish eyes noted many things at once; they noted how Sletkin, hurriedly and furtively, as though it were something stolen, popped the gun out of sight; how he and his wife became, both of them, instantly the object of a sort of unspoken but universal aloofness. To Evlampia, though her fault was probably no less than her sister's, this aloofness did not extend. She even aroused a certain sympathy, when she fell at her dead father's feet. But that she too was guilty, that was none the less felt by all. "The old man was wronged," said a gray-haired peasant with a big head, leaning, like some ancient judge, with both hands and his beard on a long staff; "on your soul lies the sin! You wronged him!" That saying was at once accepted by every one as the final judgment. The peasants' sense of justice found expression in it, I felt that at once. I noticed too that, at the first, Sletkin did not *dare* to give directions. Without him, they lifted up the body and carried it into the other house. Without asking him, the priest went for everything needful to the church, while the village elder ran to the village to send off a cart and horse to the town. Even Anna

Martinovna did not venture to use her ordinary imperious tone in ordering the samovar to be brought, "for hot water, to wash the deceased." Her orders were more like an entreaty, and she was answered rudely. . . .

I was absorbed all the while by the question: What was it exactly he wanted to say to his daughter? Did he want to forgive her or to curse her? Finally I decided that it was —forgiveness.

Three days later, the funeral of Martin Petrovitch took place. The cost of the ceremony was undertaken by my mother, who was deeply grieved at his death, and gave orders that no expense was to be spared. She did not herself go to the church, because she was unwilling, as she said, to set eyes on those two vile hussies and that nasty little Jew. But she sent Kvitsinsky, me, and Zhitkov, though from that time forward she always spoke of the latter as a regular old woman. Souvenir she did not admit to her presence, and was furious with him for long after, saying that he was the murderer of her friend. He felt his disgrace acutely; he was continually running, on tiptoe, up and down the room, next to the one where my mother was; he gave himself up to a sort of scared and abject melancholy, shuddering and muttering, "D'rectly!"

In church, and during the procession, Sletkin struck me as having recovered his self-possession. He gave directions and bustled about in his old way, and kept a greedy lookout that not a superfluous farthing should be spent, though his own pocket was not in question. Maximka, in a new Cossack dress, also a present from my mother, gave vent to such tenor notes in the choir, that certainly no one could have any doubts as to the sincerity of his devotion to the deceased. Both the sisters were duly attired in mourning, but they seemed more stupefied than grieved, especially Evlampia. Anna wore a meek, Lenten air, but made no attempt to weep, and was continually passing her handsome thin hand over her hair and cheek. Evlampia seemed deep in thought all the time. The universal, unbending alienation, condemnation, which I had noticed on the day of Harlov's death, I detected now too on the faces of all the people in the church, in their actions and their glances, but still more grave and, as it were, impersonal. It seemed as though all those people felt that the

in into which the Harlov family had fallen—this great sin –had gone now before the presence of the one righteous udge, and that for that reason there was no need now for ıem to trouble themselves and be indignant. They prayed evoutly for the soul of the dead man, whom in life they ad not specially liked, whom they had feared indeed. Very bruptly had death overtaken him.

"And it's not as though he had been drinking heavily, rother," said one peasant to another, in the porch.

"Nay, without drink he was drunken indeed," responded ıe other.

"He was cruelly wronged," the first peasant repeated the hrase that summed it up.

"Cruelly wronged," the others murmured after him.

"The deceased was a hard master to you, wasn't he?" asked a peasant, whom I recognised as one of Harlov's erfs.

"He was a master, certainly," answered the peasant, "but till . . . he was cruelly wronged!"

"Cruelly wronged," . . . I heard again in the crowd.

At the grave, too, Evlampia stood, as it were, lost. Thoughts were torturing her . . . bitter thoughts. I noticed hat Sletkin, who several times addressed some remark to ıer, she treated as she had once treated Zhitkov, and worse till.

Some days later, there was a rumour all over our neighbourhood, that Evlampia Martinovna had left the home of ıer fathers forever, leaving all the property that came to her o her sister and brother-in-law, and only taking some hunlreds of rubles. . . . "So Anna's bought her out, it seems!" emarked my mother, "but you and I, certainly," she added, ddressing Zhitkov, with whom she was playing picquet—e took Souvenir's place, "are not skilful hands!" Zhitov looked dejectedly at his mighty palms. . . . "Hands ike that! Not skilful!" he seemed to be saying to himelf. . . .

Soon after, my mother and I went to live in Moscow, and nany years passed before it was my lot to behold Martin Petrovitch's daughters again.

XXX

But I did see them again. Anna Martinovna I came across in the most ordinary way.

After my mother's death I paid a visit to our village, where I had not been for over fifteen years, and there I received an invitation from the mediator (at that time the process of settling the boundaries between the peasants and their former owners was taking place over the whole of Russia with a slowness not yet forgotten) to a meeting of the other landowners of our neighbourhood, to be held on the estate of the widow Anna Sletkin. The news that my mother's "nasty little Jew," with the prune-coloured eyes, no longer existed in this world, caused me, I confess, no regret whatever. But it was interesting to get a glimpse of his widow. She had the reputation in the neighbourhood, of a first-rate manager. And so it proved; her estate and homestead and the house itself (I could not help glancing at the roof; it was an iron one) all turned out to be in excellent order; everything was neat, clean, tidied-up, where needful—painted, as though its mistress were a German. Anna Martinovna herself, of course, looked older. But the peculiar, cold, and, as it were, wicked charm which had once so fascinated me had not altogether left her. She was dressed in rustic fashion, but elegantly. She received us, not cordially —that word was not applicable to her—but courteously, and on seeing me, a witness of that fearful scene, not an eyelash quivered. She made not the slightest reference to my mother, nor her father, nor her sister, nor her husband.

She had two daughters, both very pretty, slim young things, with charming little faces, and a bright and friendly expression in their black eyes. There was a son, too, a little like his father, but still a boy to be proud of! During the discussions between the landowners, Anna Martinovna's attitude was composed and dignified; she showed no sign of being specially obstinate, nor specially grasping. But none had a truer perception of their own interests than she of hers; none could more convincingly expound and defend their rights. All the laws "pertinent to the case," even the Minister's circulars, she had thoroughly mastered. She spoke

ittle, and in a quiet voice, but every word she uttered was o the point. It ended in our all signifying our agreement to ıll her demands, and making concessions, which we could ɔnly marvel at ourselves. On our way home, some of the worthy landowners even used harsh words of themselves; hey all hummed and hawed, and shook their heads.

"Ah, she's got brains, that woman!" said one.

"A tricky baggage!" put in another less delicate pro-ɔrietor. "Smooth in word, but cruel in deed!"

"And a screw into the bargain!" added a third; "not ı glass of vodka nor a morsel of caviare for us—what do 'ou think of that?"

"What can one expect of her?" suddenly croaked a gen-leman who had been silent till then, "every one knows she ɔoisoned her husband!"

To my astonishment, nobody thought fit to controvert his awful and certainly unfounded charge! I was the more urprised at this, as, in spite of the slighting expressions I ıave reported, all of them felt respect for Anna Martinovna, ıot excluding the indelicate landowner. As for the mediator, ıe waxed positively eloquent.

"Put her on a throne," he exclaimed, "she'd be another ɔemiramis or Catherine the Second! The discipline among ıer peasants is a perfect model. . . . The education of her hildren is model! What a head! What brains!"

Without going into the question of Semiramis and Cath-rine, there was no doubt Anna Martinovna was living a ery happy life. Ease, inward and external, the pleasant erenity of spiritual health, seemed the very atmosphere about ierself, her family, all her surroundings. How far she had eserved such happiness . . . that is another question. Such uestions, though, are only propounded in youth. Every-hing in the world, good and bad, comes to man, not through is deserts, but in consequence of some as yet unknown but ɔgical laws which I will not take upon myself to indicate, hough I sometimes fancy I have a dim perception of them.

XXXI

I questioned the mediator about Evlampia Martinovna, nd learnt that she had been lost sight of completely ever

since she left home, and probably "had departed this life long ago."

So our worthy mediator expressed himself . . . but I am convinced that I *have seen* Evlampia, that I have come across her. This was how it was.

Four years after my interview with Anna Martinovna, I was spending the summer at Murino, a little hamlet near Petersburg, a well-known resort of summer visitors of the middle class. The shooting was pretty decent about Murino at that time, and I used to go out with my gun almost every day. I had a companion on my expeditions, a man of the tradesman class, called Vikulov, a very sensible and good-natured fellow; but, as he said of himself, of no position whatever. This man had been simply everywhere, and everything! Nothing could astonish him, he knew everything—but he cared for nothing but shooting and wine. Well, one day we were on our way home to Murino, and we chanced to pass a solitary house, standing at the crossroads, and enclosed by a high, close paling. It was not the first time I had seen the house, and every time it excited my curiosity. There was something about it mysterious, locked-up, grimly-dumb, something suggestive of a prison or a hospital. Nothing of it could be seen from the road but its steep, dark, red-painted roof. There was only one pair of gates in the whole fence; and these seemed fastened and never opened. No sound came from the other side of them. For all that, we felt that some one was certainly living in the house; it had not at all the air of a deserted dwelling. On the contrary, everything about it was stout, and tight, and strong, as if it would stand a siege!

"What is that fortress?" I asked my companion. "Don't you know?"

Vikulov gave a sly wink. "A fine building, eh? The police captain of these parts gets a nice little income out of it!"

"How's that?"

"I'll tell you. You've heard, I daresay, of the Flagellant dissenters—that do without priests, you know?"

"Yes."

"Well, it's there that their chief mother lives."

"A woman?"

"Yes—the mother; a mother of God, they say."

"Nonsense!"

"I tell you, it is so. She is a strict one, they say. . . . A regular commander-in-chief! She rules over thousands! I'd take her, and all these mothers of God . . . But what's the use of talking?"

He called his Pegashka, a marvellous dog, with an excellent scent, but with no notion of setting. Vikulov was obliged to tie her hind paws to keep her from running so curiously.

His words sank into my memory. I sometimes went out of my way to pass by the mysterious house. One day I had just got up to it, when suddenly—wonderful to relate!—a bolt grated in the gates, a key creaked in the lock, then the gates themselves slowly parted, there appeared a large horse's head, with a plaited forelock under a decorated yoke, and slowly there rolled into the road a small cart, like those driven by horse-dealers and higglers. On the leather cushion of the cart, near to me, sat a peasant of about thirty, of a remarkably handsome and attractive appearance, in a neat black smock, and a black cap, pulled down low on his forehead. He was carefully driving the well-fed horse, whose sides were as broad as a stove. Beside the peasant, on the far side of the cart, sat a tall woman, as straight as an arrow. Her head was covered by a costly-looking black shawl. She was dressed in a short jerkin of dove-coloured velvet, and a dark blue merino skirt; her white hands she held discreetly clasped on her bosom. The cart turned on the road to the left, and brought the woman within two paces of me; she turned her head a little, and I recognised Evlampia Harlov. I knew her at once, I did not doubt for one instant, and indeed no doubt was possible; eyes like hers, and above all that cut of the lips—haughty and sensual—I had never seen in any one else. Her face had grown longer and thinner, the skin was darker, here and there lines could be discerned; but, above all, the expression of the face was changed! It is difficult to do justice in words to the self-confidence, the sternness, the pride it had gained! Not simply the serenity of power—the satiety of power was visible in every feature. The careless glance she cast at me told of long years of habitually meeting nothing but reverent, unquestioning obe-

dience. That woman clearly lived surrounded, not by worshippers, but by slaves. She had clearly forgotten even the time when any command, any desire of hers, was not carried out at the instant! I called her loudly by her name and her father's; she gave a faint start, looked at me a second time, not with alarm, but with contemptuous wrath, as though asking: "Who dares to disturb me?" and barely parting her lips, uttered a word of command. The peasant sitting beside her started forward, with a wave of his arm struck the horse with the reins—the horse set off at a strong rapid trot, and the cart disappeared.

Since then I have not seen Evlampia again. In what way Martin Petrovitch's daughter came to be a Holy Virgin in the Flagellant sect I cannot imagine. But, who knows, very likely she has founded a sect which will be called—or even now is called—after her name, the Evlampieshtchin sect? Anything may be, anything may come to pass.

And so this is what I had to tell you of my Lear of the Steppes, of his family and his doings.

The story-teller ceased, and we talked a little longer, and then parted, each to his home.

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XVI

1880 TO 1890:

Les Soirées de Médan; Émile Zola, and others (1880).
Contes Cruels, Villiers de L'Isle-Adam (1880).
L'Attaque du Moulin, Émile Zola (1880).
Boule de Suif, Guy de Maupassant (1880).
Uncle Remus, J. C. Harris (1880).
Vorstadtgeschichten, Heinrich Seidel (1880).
Vita dei Campi, Giovanni Verga (1880).
Contes pour les Femmes, Théodore de Banville (1881).
Un Mariage d'Amour, Ludovic Halévy (1881).
La Maison Tellier, Guy de Maupassant (1881).
Thrawn Janet, R. L. Stevenson (1881).
Contes Féeriques, Théodore de Banville (1882).
Poems in Prose, Ivan Turgeneff (1882).
Quatre Petits Romans, Jean Richepin (1882).
Contes en Prose, François Coppée (1882).
The Merry Men, R. L. Stevenson (1882).
Cuentos y Dialogos, Juan Valera (1882).
Mademoiselle Fifi, Guy de Maupassant (1882).
Vingt Contes Nouveaux, François Coppée (1883).
After Death, Ivan Turgeneff (1883).
Mrs. Knollys, F. J. Stimson (1883).
Contes de la Bécasse, Guy de Maupassant (1883).
Plautus im Nonnenkloster, C. F. Meyer (1883).
Contes Héroiques, Théodore de Banville (1884).
Clair de Lune, Guy de Maupassant (1884).
Nights with Uncle Remus, J. C. Harris (1884).
Cavalleria Rusticana, Giovanni Verga (1884).
The Lady or the Tiger?, and Other Stories; Frank R. Stockton (1884).

Markheim, R. L. Stevenson (1884).
In the Tennessee Mountains, Charles Egbert Craddock (1884).
Ivan Ilyitch, and Other Stories; Lyof Tolstoy (1884–86).
Contes Bourgeois, Théodore de Banville (1885).
Olalla, R. L. Stevenson (1885).
Contes et Récits en Prose, François Coppée (1885).
Contes du Jour et de la Nuit, Guy de Maupassant (1885).
More New Arabian Nights, R. L. Stevenson (1885).
Monsieur Parent, Guy de Maupassant (1886).
The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, R. L. Stevenson (1886).
La Belle Nivernaise, Alphonse Daudet (1886).
A White Heron and Other Stories, Sarah Orne Jewett (1886).
Le Horla, Guy de Maupassant (1887).
A Humble Romance, Mary E. Wilkins (1887).
The Merry Men, and Other Tales and Fables, R. L. Stevenson (1887).
In Ole Virginia, Thomas Nelson Page (1887).
Contes Rapides, François Coppée (1888).
Plain Tales from the Hills, Rudyard Kipling (1888).
Soldiers Three, Rudyard Kipling (1888).
The Phantom Rickshaw, Rudyard Kipling (1888).
Auld Licht Idylls, J. M. Barrie (1888).
Wessex Tales, Thomas Hardy (1888).
Geschwister, Hermann Sudermann (1888).
Pastels, Paul Bourget (1889).
A Window in Thrums, J. M. Barrie (1889).

MARKHEIM

MARKHEIM

MARKHEIM, written by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) in 1884, was first published in the Christmas number of Unwin's Annual, 1885, under the title Markheim: The Broken Shaft. It was republished in 1887, in the collection entitled The Merry Men, and Other Tales and Fables. The most important of Stevenson's Short Stories are: A Lodging for the Night (1877), Will o' the Mill (1878), The Sire de Malétroit's Door (1878), The Pavilion on the Links (1880), Thrawn Janet (1881), Markheim (1885), Olalla (1885), The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886), The Beach of Falesá (1892), The Tale of Tod Lapraik (in David Balfour: 1893). For an illustration of the Short Story in process of construction, the reader is referred to the eighth chapter of Stevenson's The Master of Ballantrae (1888–89).

Most critics of Stevenson's writings have not failed to remark both the resemblance and the difference between Markheim and The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Graham Balfour says, in The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson: "A subject much in his thoughts at this time [1885] was the duality of man's nature and the alternation of good and evil; and he was for a long time casting about for a story to embody this central idea. Out of this frame of mind had come the sombre imagination of Markheim, but that was not what he required. The true story still delayed, till suddenly one night he had a dream. He awoke, and found himself in possession of two, or rather three, of the scenes in The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

Though Markheim must perhaps yield in point of greatness to Dr. Jekyll (that most vertiginous of the works of fiction of the nineteenth century), it is surely its superior as an embodiment of the art of the Short Story, in its economy of means and its precision of effect. The words of Balzac may well be applied to it: "A narrative sharp and incisive as a blow with an axe."

And in "Markheim, that singular and vivid study," as L. Cope Cornford calls it, the wonderful conversation between Markheim and his visitant surely holds first place. It is one of the most brilliant of all its author's achievements, and has a wisdom that goes to the heart of things.

AUTHORITIES:

Robert Louis Stevenson, by L. Cope Cornford.

The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson, by Graham Balfour.

Robert Louis Stevenson, by Walter Raleigh.

Partial Portraits, by Henry James.

The Short Story in English, by Henry Seidel Canby (Chapter XVII).

"Yes," said the dealer, "our windfalls are of various kinds. Some customers are ignorant, and then I touch a dividend on my superior knowledge. Some are dishonest," and here he held up the candle, so that the light fell strongly on his visitor, "and in that case," he continued, "I profit by my virtue."

Markheim had but just entered from the daylight streets, and his eyes had not yet grown familiar with the mingled shine and darkness in the shop. At these pointed words, and before the near presence of the flame, he blinked painfully and looked aside.

The dealer chuckled. "You come to me on Christmas day," he resumed, "when you know that I am alone in my house, put up my shutters, and make a point of refusing business. Well, you will have to pay for that; you will have to pay for my loss of time, when I should be balancing my books; you will have to pay, besides, for a kind of manner that I remark in you to-day very strongly. I am the essence of discretion, and ask no awkward questions; but when a customer cannot look me in the eye, he has to pay for it." The dealer once more chuckled; and then, changing to his usual business voice, though still with a note of irony, "You can give, as usual, a clear account of how you came into the possession of the object?" he continued. "Still your uncle's cabinet? A remarkable collector, sir!"

And the little pale, round-shouldered dealer stood almost on tiptoe, looking over the top of his gold spectacles, and nodding his head with every mark of disbelief. Markheim returned his gaze with one of infinite pity, and a touch of horror.

"This time," said he, "you are in error. I have not come to sell, but to buy. I have no curios to dispose of; my

uncle's cabinet is bare to the wainscot; even were it still intact, I have done well on the Stock Exchange, and should more likely add to it than otherwise, and my errand to-day is simplicity itself. I seek a Christmas present for a lady," he continued, waxing more fluent as he struck into the speech he had prepared; "and certainly I owe you every excuse for thus disturbing you upon so small a matter. But the thing was neglected yesterday; I must produce my little compliment at dinner; and, as you very well know, a rich marriage is not a thing to be neglected."

There followed a pause, during which the dealer seemed to weigh this statement incredulously. The ticking of many clocks among the curious lumber of the shop, and the faint rushing of the cabs in a near thoroughfare, filled up the interval of silence.

"Well, sir," said the dealer, "be it so. You are an old customer after all; and if, as you say, you have the chance of a good marriage, far be it from me to be an obstacle. Here is a nice thing for a lady now," he went on, "this hand-glass —fifteenth century, warranted; comes from a good collection, too; but I reserve the name, in the interests of my customer, who was, just like yourself, my dear sir, the nephew and sole heir of a remarkable collector."

The dealer, while he thus ran on in his dry and biting voice, had stooped to take the object from its place; and, as he had done so, a shock had passed through Markheim, a start both of hand and foot, a sudden leap of many tumultuous passions to the face. It passed as swiftly as it came, and left no trace beyond a certain trembling of the hand that now received the glass.

"A glass," he said hoarsely, and then paused, and repeated it more clearly. "A glass? For Christmas? Surely not?"

"And why not?" cried the dealer. "Why not a glass?"

Markheim was looking upon him with an indefinable expression. "You ask me why not?" he said. "Why, look here—look in it—look at yourself! Do you like to see it? No! nor I—nor any man."

The little man had jumped back when Markheim had so suddenly confronted him with the mirror; but now, perceiving there was nothing worse on hand, he chuckled. "Your future lady, sir, must be pretty hard favoured," said he.

"I ask you," said Markheim, "for a Christmas present, and you give me this—this damned reminder of years, and sins and follies—this hand-conscience! Did you mean it? Had you a thought in your mind? Tell me. It will be better for you if you do. Come, tell me about yourself. I hazard a guess now, that you are in secret a very charitable man?"

The dealer looked closely at his companion. It was very odd, Markheim did not appear to be laughing; there was something in his face like an eager sparkle of hope, but nothing of mirth.

"What are you driving at?" the dealer asked.

"Not charitable?" returned the other, gloomily. "Not charitable; not pious; not scrupulous; unloving, unbeloved; a hand to get money, a safe to keep it. Is that all? Dear God, man, is that all?"

"I will tell you what it is," began the dealer, with some sharpness, and then broke off again into a chuckle. "But I see this is a love-match of yours, and you have been drinking the lady's health."

"Ah!" cried Markheim, with a strange curiosity. "Ah, have you been in love? Tell me about that."

"I!" cried the dealer. "I in love! I never had the time, nor have I the time to-day for all this nonsense. Will you take the glass?"

"Where is the hurry?" returned Markheim. "It is very pleasant to stand here talking; and life is so short and insecure that I would not hurry away from any pleasure—no, not even from so mild a one as this. We should rather cling, cling to what little we can get, like a man at a cliff's edge. Every second is a cliff, if you think upon it—a cliff a mile high—high enough, if we fall, to dash us out of every feature of humanity. Hence it is best to talk pleasantly. Let us talk of each other; why should we wear this mask? Let us be confidential. Who knows, we might become friends?"

"I have just one word to say to you," said the dealer. "Either make your purchase, or walk out of my shop."

"True, true," said Markheim. "Enough fooling. To business. Show me something else."

The dealer stooped once more, this time to replace the glass upon the shelf, his thin blond hair falling over his eyes

as he did so. Markheim moved a little nearer, with one hand in the pocket of his greatcoat; he drew himself up and filled his lungs; at the same time many different emotions were depicted together on his face—terror, horror, and resolve, fascination and a physical repulsion; and through a haggard lift of his upper lip, his teeth looked out.

"This, perhaps, may suit," observed the dealer; and then, as he began to rearise, Markheim bounded from behind upon his victim. The long, skewerlike dagger flashed and fell. The dealer struggled like a hen, striking his temple on the shelf, and then tumbled on the floor in a heap.

Time had some score of small voices in that shop, some stately and slow as was becoming to their great age; others garrulous and hurried. All these told out the seconds in an intricate chorus of tickings. Then the passage of a lad's feet, heavily running on the pavement, broke in upon these smaller voices and startled Markheim into the consciousness of his surroundings. He looked about him awfully. The candle stood on the counter, its flame solemnly wagging in a draught; and by that inconsiderable movement, the whole room was filled with noiseless bustle and kept heaving like a sea: the tall shadows nodding, the gross blots of darkness swelling and dwindling as with respiration, the faces of the portraits and the china gods changing and wavering like images in water. The inner door stood ajar, and peered into that leaguer of shadows with a long slit of daylight like a pointing finger.

From these fear-stricken rovings, Markheim's eyes returned to the body of his victim, where it lay both humped and sprawling, incredibly small and strangely meaner than in life. In these poor, miserly clothes, in that ungainly attitude, the dealer lay like so much sawdust. Markheim had feared to see it, and, lo! it was nothing. And yet, as he gazed, this bundle of old clothes and pool of blood began to find eloquent voices. There it must lie; there was none to work the cunning hinges or direct the miracle of locomotion —there it must lie till it was found. Found! ay, and then? Then would this dead flesh lift up a cry that would ring over England, and fill the world with the echoes of pursuit. Ay, dead or not, this was still the enemy. "Time was that when the brains were out," he thought; and the first word

struck into his mind. Time, now that the deed was accomplished—time, which had closed for the victim, had become instant and momentous for the slayer.

The thought was yet in his mind, when, first one and then another, with every variety of pace and voice—one deep as the bell from a cathedral turret, another ringing on its treble notes the prelude of a waltz—the clocks began to strike the hour of three in the afternoon.

The sudden outbreak of so many tongues in that dumb chamber staggered him. He began to bestir himself, going to and fro with the candle, beleaguered by moving shadows, and startled to the soul by chance reflections. In many rich mirrors, some of home designs, some from Venice or Amsterdam, he saw his face repeated and repeated, as it were an army of spies; his own eyes met and detected him; and the sound of his own steps, lightly as they fell, vexed the surrounding quiet. And still as he continued to fill his pockets, his mind accused him, with a sickening iteration, of the thousand faults of his design. He should have chosen a more quiet hour; he should have prepared an alibi; he should not have used a knife; he should have been more cautious, and only bound and gagged the dealer, and not killed him; he should have been more bold, and killed the servant also; he should have done all things otherwise; poignant regrets, weary, incessant toiling of the mind to change what was unchangeable, to plan what was now useless, to be the architect of the irrevocable past. Meanwhile, and behind all this activity, brute terrors, like the scurrying of rats in a deserted attic, filled the more remote chambers of his brain with riot; the hand of the constable would fall heavy on his shoulder, and his nerves would jerk like a hooked fish; or he beheld, in galloping defile, the dock, the prison, the gallows, and the black coffin.

Terror of the people in the street sat down before his mind like a besieging army. It was impossible, he thought, but that some rumour of the struggle must have reached their ears and set on edge their curiosity; and now, in all the neighbouring houses, he divined them sitting motionless and with uplifted ear—solitary people, condemned to spend Christmas dwelling alone on memories of the past, and now startingly recalled from that tender exercise; happy family

parties, struck into silence round the table, the mother still with raised finger: every degree and age and humour, but all, by their own hearths, prying and hearkening and weaving the rope that was to hang him. Sometimes it seemed to him he could not move too softly; the clink of the tall Bohemian goblets rang out loudly like a bell; and alarmed by the bigness of the ticking, he was tempted to stop the clocks. And then, again, with a swift transition of his terrors, the very silence of the place appeared a source of peril, and a thing to strike and freeze the passer-by; and he would step more boldly, and bustle aloud among the contents of the shop, and imitate, with elaborate bravado, the movements of a busy man at ease in his own house.

But he was now so pulled about by different alarms that, while one portion of his mind was still alert and cunning, another trembled on the brink of lunacy. One hallucination in particular took a strong hold on his credulity. The neighbour hearkening with white face beside his window, the passer-by arrested by a horrible surmise on the pavement—these could at worst suspect, they could not know; through the brick walls and shuttered windows only sounds could penetrate. But here, within the house, was he alone? He knew he was; he had watched the servant set forth sweethearting, in her poor best, "out for the day" written in every ribbon and smile. Yes, he was alone, of course; and yet, in the bulk of empty house about him, he could surely hear a stir of delicate footing—he was surely conscious, inexplicably conscious of some presence. Ay, surely; to every room and corner of the house his imagination followed it; and now it was a faceless thing, and yet had eyes to see with; and again it was a shadow of himself; and yet again behold the image of the dead dealer, reinspired with cunning and hatred.

At times, with a strong effort, he would glance at the open door which still seemed to repel his eyes. The house was tall, the skylight small and dirty, the day blind with fog; and the light that filtered down to the ground story was exceedingly faint, and showed dimly on the threshold of the shop. And yet, in that strip of doubtful brightness, did there not hang wavering a shadow?

Suddenly, from the street outside, a very jovial gentleman began to beat with a staff on the shop-door, accompany-

ing his blows with shouts and railleries in which the dealer was continually called upon by name. Markheim, smitten into ice, glanced at the dead man. But no! he lay quite still; he was fled away far beyond ear-shot of these blows and shoutings; he was sunk beneath seas of silence; and his name, which would once have caught his notice above the howling of a storm, had become an empty sound. And presently the jovial gentleman desisted from his knocking and departed.

Here was a broad hint to hurry what remained to be done, to get forth from this accusing neighbourhood, to plunge into a path of London multitudes, and to reach, on the other side of day, that haven of safety and apparent innocence—his bed. One visitor had come: at any moment another might follow and be more obstinate. To have done the deed, and yet not to reap the profit, would be too abhorrent a failure. The money, that was now Markheim's concern; and as a means to that, the keys.

He glanced over his shoulder at the open door, where the shadow was still lingering and shivering; and with no conscious repugnance of the mind, yet with a tremor of the belly, he drew near the body of his victim. The human character had quite departed. Like a suit half-stuffed with bran, the limbs lay scattered, the trunk doubled, on the floor; and yet the thing repelled him. Although so dingy and inconsiderable to the eye, he feared it might have more significance to the touch. He took the body by the shoulders, and turned it on its back. It was strangely light and supple, and the limbs, as if they had been broken, fell into the oddest postures. The face was robbed of all expression; but it was as pale as wax, and shockingly smeared with blood about one temple. That was, for Markheim, the one displeasing circumstance. It carried him back, upon the instant, to a certain fair day in a fishers' village: a gray day, a piping wind, a crowd upon the street, the blare of brasses, the booming of drums, the nasal voice of a ballad-singer; and a boy going to and fro, buried over head in the crowd and divided between interest and fear, until, coming out upon the chief place of concourse, he beheld a booth and a great screen with pictures, dismally designed, garishly coloured: Brownrigg with her apprentice; the Mannings with their murdered guest; Weare in the death-grip of Thurtell; and a score besides of

famous crimes. The thing was as clear as an illusion; he was once again that little boy; he was looking once again, and with the same sense of physical revolt, at these vile pictures; he was still stunned by the thumping of the drums. A bar of that day's music returned upon his memory; and at that, for the first time, a qualm came over him, a breath of nausea, a sudden weakness of the joints, which he must instantly resist and conquer.

He judged it more prudent to confront than to flee from these considerations; looking the more hardily in the dead face, bending his mind to realise the nature and greatness of his crime. So little a while ago that face had moved with every change of sentiment, that pale mouth had spoken, that body had been all on fire with governable energies; and now, and by his act, that piece of life had been arrested, as the horologist, with interjected finger, arrests the beating of the clock. So he reasoned in vain; he could rise to no more remorseful consciousness; the same heart which had shuddered before the painted effigies of crime, looked on its reality unmoved. At best, he felt a gleam of pity for one who had been endowed in vain with all those faculties that can make the world a garden of enchantment, one who had never lived and who was now dead. But of penitence, no, not a tremor.

With that, shaking himself clear of these considerations, he found the keys and advanced towards the open door of the shop. Outside, it had begun to rain smartly; and the sound of the shower upon the roof had banished silence. Like some dripping cavern, the chambers of the house were haunted by an incessant echoing, which filled the ear and mingled with the ticking of the clocks. And, as Markheim approached the door, he seemed to hear, in answer to his own cautious tread, the steps of another foot withdrawing up the stair. The shadow still palpitated loosely on the threshold. He threw a ton's weight of resolve upon his muscles, and drew back the door.

The faint, foggy daylight glimmered dimly on the bare floor and stairs; on the bright suit of armour posted, halbert in hand, upon the landing; and on the dark wood-carvings, and framed pictures that hung against the yellow panels of the wainscot. So loud was the beating of the rain through

all the house that, in Markheim's ears, it began to be distinguished into many different sounds. Footsteps and sighs, the tread of regiments marching in the distance, the chink of money in the counting, and the creaking of doors held stealthily ajar, appeared to mingle with the patter of the drops upon the cupola and the gushing of the water in the pipes. The sense that he was not alone grew upon him to the verge of madness. On every side he was haunted and begirt by presences. He heard them moving in the upper chambers; from the shop, he heard the dead man getting to his legs; and as he began with a great effort to mount the stairs, feet fled quietly before him and followed stealthily behind. If he were but deaf, he thought, how tranquilly he would possess his soul! And then again, and hearkening with ever fresh attention, he blessed himself for that unresting sense which held the outposts and stood a trusty sentinel upon his life. His head turned continually on his neck; his eyes, which seemed starting from their orbits, scouted on every side, and on every side were half-rewarded as with the tail of something nameless vanishing. The four-and-twenty steps to the first floor were four-and-twenty agonies.

On that first story, the doors stood ajar, three of them like three ambushes, shaking his nerves like the throats of cannon. He could never again, he felt, be sufficiently immured and fortified from men's observing eyes; he longed to be home, girt in by walls, buried among bedclothes, and invisible to all but God. And at that thought he wondered a little, recollecting tales of other murderers and the fear they were said to entertain of heavenly avengers. It was not so, at least, with him. He feared the laws of nature, lest, in their callous and immutable procedure, they should preserve some damning evidence of his crime. He feared tenfold more, with a slavish, superstitious terror, some scission in the continuity of man's experience, some wilful illegality of nature. He played a game of skill, depending on the rules, calculating consequence from cause; and what if nature, as the defeated tyrant overthrew the chess-board, should break the mould of their succession? The like had befallen Napoleon (so writers said) when the winter changed the time of its appearance. The like might befall Markheim: the solid walls might become transparent and reveal his doings like those of

bees in a glass hive; the stout planks might yield under his foot like quicksands and detain him in their clutch; ay, and there were soberer accidents that might destroy him: if, for instance, the house should fall and imprison him beside the body of his victim; or the house next door should fly on fire, and the firemen invade him from all sides. These things he feared; and, in a sense, these things might be called the hands of God reached forth against sin. But about God himself he was at ease; his act was doubtless exceptional, but so were his excuses, which God knew; it was there, and not among men, that he felt sure of justice.

When he had got safe into the drawing-room, and shut the door behind him, he was aware of a respite from alarms. The room was quite dismantled, uncarpeted besides, and strewn with packing-cases and incongruous furniture; several great pier-glasses, in which he beheld himself at various angles, like an actor on a stage; many pictures, framed and unframed, standing, with their faces to the wall; a fine Sheraton sideboard, a cabinet of marquetry, and a great old bed, with tapestry hangings. The windows opened to the floor; but by great good fortune the lower part of the shutters had been closed, and this concealed him from the neighbours. Here, then, Markheim drew in a packing-case before the cabinet, and began to search among the keys. It was a long business, for there were many; and it was irksome, besides; for, after all, there might be nothing in the cabinet, and time was on the wing. But the closeness of the occupation sobered him. With the tail of his eye he saw the door—even glanced at it from time to time directly, like a besieged commander pleased to verify the good estate of his defences. But in truth he was at peace. The rain falling in the street sounded natural and pleasant. Presently, on the other side, the notes of a piano were wakened to the music of a hymn, and the voices of many children took up the air and words. How stately, how comfortable was the melody! How fresh the youthful voices! Markheim gave ear to it smilingly, as he sorted out the keys; and his mind was thronged with answerable ideas and images; church-going children and the pealing of the high organ; children afield, bathers by the brookside, ramblers on the brambly common, kite-flyers in the windy and cloud-navigated sky; and then, at another cadence

of the hymn, back again to church, and the somnolence of summer Sundays, and the high genteel voice of the parson (which he smiled a little to recall) and the painted Jacobean tombs, and the dim lettering of the Ten Commandments in the chancel.

And as he sat thus, at once busy and absent, he was startled to his feet. A flash of ice, a flash of fire, a bursting gush of blood, went over him, and then he stood transfixed and thrilling. A step mounted the stair slowly and steadily, and presently a hand was laid upon the knob, and the lock clicked, and the door opened.

Fear held Markheim in a vice. What to expect he knew not, whether the dead man walking, or the official ministers of human justice, or some chance witness blindly stumbling in to consign him to the gallows. But when a face was thrust into the aperture, glanced round the room, looked at him, nodded and smiled as if in friendly recognition, and then withdrew again, and the door closed behind it, his fear broke loose from his control in a hoarse cry. At the sound of this the visitant returned.

"Did you call me?" he asked, pleasantly, and with that he entered the room and closed the door behind him.

Markheim stood and gazed at him with all his eyes. Perhaps there was a film upon his sight, but the outlines of the newcomer seemed to change and waver like those of the idols in the wavering candle-light of the shop; and at times he thought he knew him; and at times he thought he bore a likeness to himself; and always, like a lump of living terror, there lay in his bosom the conviction that this thing was not of the earth and not of God.

And yet the creature had a strange air of the commonplace, as he stood looking on Markheim with a smile; and when he added: "You are looking for the money, I believe?" it was in the tones of every-day politeness.

Markheim made no answer.

"I should warn you," resumed the other, "that the maid has left her sweetheart earlier than usual and will soon be here. If Mr. Markheim be found in this house, I need not describe to him the consequences."

"You know me?" cried the murderer.

The visitor smiled. "You have long been a favourite of

mine," he said; "and I have long observed and often sought to help you."

"What are you?" cried Markheim: "the devil?"

"What I may be," returned the other, "cannot affect the service I propose to render you."

"It can," cried Markheim; "it does! Be helped by you? No, never; not by you! You do not know me yet; thank God, you do not know me!"

"I know you," replied the visitant, with a sort of kind severity or rather firmness. "I know you to the soul."

"Know me!" cried Markheim. "Who can do so? My life is but a travesty and slander on myself. I have lived to belie my nature. All men do; all men are better than this disguise that grows about and stifles them. You see each dragged away by life, like one whom bravos have seized and muffled in a cloak. If they had their own control—if you could see their faces, they would be altogether different, they would shine out for heroes and saints! I am worse than most; myself is more overlaid; my excuse is known to me and God. But, had I the time, I could disclose myself."

"To me?" inquired the visitant.

"To you before all," returned the murderer. "I supposed you were intelligent. I thought—since you exist—you would prove a reader of the heart. And yet you would propose to judge me by my acts! Think of it; my acts! I was born and I have lived in a land of giants; giants have dragged me by the wrists since I was born out of my mother—the giants of circumstance. And you would judge me by my acts! But can you not look within? Can you not understand that evil is hateful to me? Can you not see within me the clear writing of conscience, never blurred by any wilful sophistry, although too often disregarded? Can you not read me for a thing that surely must be common as humanity—the unwilling sinner?"

"All this is very feelingly expressed," was the reply, "but it regards me not. These points of consistency are beyond my province, and I care not in the least by what compulsion you may have been dragged away, so as you are but carried in the right direction. But time flies; the servant delays, looking in the faces of the crowd and at the pictures on the

oardings, but still she keeps moving nearer; and remember, it is as if the gallows itself were striding towards you hrough the Christmas streets! Shall I help you; I, who now all? Shall I tell you where to find the money?"

"For what price?" asked Markheim.

"I offer you the service for a Christmas gift," returned he other.

Markheim could not refrain from smiling with a kind of itter triumph. "No," said he, "I will take nothing at your ands; if I were dying of thirst, and it was your hand that ut the pitcher to my lips, I should find the courage to refuse. t may be credulous, but I will do nothing to commit myself o evil."

"I have no objection to a death-bed repentance," observed the visitant.

"Because you disbelieve their efficacy!" Markheim ried.

"I do not say so," returned the other; "but I look on hese things from a different side, and when the life is done ıy interest falls. The man has lived to serve me, to spread lack looks under colour of religion, or to sow tares in the wheat-field, as you do, in a course of weak compliance with esire. Now that he draws so near to his deliverance, he can dd but one act of service—to repent, to die smiling, and hus to build up in confidence and hope the more timorous f my surviving followers. I am not so hard a master. Try ıe. Accept my help. Please yourself in life as you have lone hitherto; please yourself more amply, spread your lbows at the board; and when the night begins to fall and he curtains to be drawn, I tell you, for your greater comfort, hat you will find it even easy to compound your quarrel with our conscience, and to make a truckling peace with God. came but now from such a death-bed, and the room was ull of sincere mourners, listening to the man's last words: nd when I looked into that face, which had been set as a lint against mercy, I found it smiling with hope."

"And do you, then, suppose me such a creature?" asked Markheim. "Do you think I have no more generous aspirations than to sin, and sin, and sin, and, at last, sneak into heaven? My heart rises at the thought. Is this, then, your experience of mankind? or is it because you find me with red

hands that you presume such baseness? and is this crime of murder indeed so impious as to dry up the very springs of good?"

"Murder is to me no special category," replied the other. "All sins are murder, even as all life is war. I behold your race, like starving mariners on a raft, plucking crusts out of the hands of famine and feeding on each other's lives. I follow sins beyond the moment of their acting; I find in all that the last consequence is death; and to my eyes, the pretty maid who thwarts her mother with such taking graces on a question of a ball, drips no less visibly with human gore than such a murderer as yourself. Do I say that I follow sins? I follow virtues also; they differ not by the thickness of a nail, they are both scythes for the reaping angel of Death. Evil, for which I live, consists not in action, but in character. The bad man is dear to me; not the bad act, whose fruits, if we could follow them far enough down the hurtling cataract of the ages, might yet be found more blessed than those of the rarest virtues. And it is not because you have killed a dealer, but because you are Markheim, that I offered to forward your escape."

"I will lay my heart open to you," answered Markheim. "This crime on which you find me is my last. On my way to it I have learned many lessons; itself is a lesson, a momentous lesson. Hitherto I have been driven with revolt to what I would not; I was a bond-slave to poverty, driven and scourged. There are robust virtues that can stand in t temptations; mine was not so: I had a thirst of pleasure. to-day, and out of this deed, I pluck both warning and ri —both the power and a fresh resolve to be myself. I bec in all things a free actor in the world; I begin to see myself all changed, these hands the agents of good, this heart at peace. Something comes over me out of the past; something of what I have dreamed on Sabbath evenings to the sound of the church organ, of what I forecast when I shed tears over noble books, or talked, an innocent child, with my mother. There lies my life; I have wandered a few years, but now I see once more my city of destination."

"You are to use this money on the Stock Exchange, I think?" remarked the visitor; "and there, if I mistake not, you have already lost some thousands?"

"Ah," said Markheim, "but this time I have a sure thing."

"This time, again, you will lose," replied the visitor quietly.

"Ah, but I keep back the half!" cried Markheim.

"That also you will lose," said the other.

The sweat started upon Markheim's brow. "Well, then, what matter?" he exclaimed. "Say it be lost, say I am plunged again in poverty, shall one part of me, and that the worse, continue until the end to override the better? Evil and good run strong in me, haling me both ways. I do not love the one thing, I love all. I can conceive great deeds, renunciations, martyrdoms; and though I be fallen to such a crime as murder, pity is no stranger to my thoughts. I pity the poor; who knows their trials better than myself? I pity and help them; I prize love, I love honest laughter; there is no good thing nor true thing on earth but I love it from my heart. And are my vices only to direct my life, and my virtues to lie without effect, like some passive lumber of the mind? Not so; good, also, is a spring of acts."

But the visitant raised his finger. "For six-and-thirty years that you have been in this world," said he, "through many changes of fortune and varieties of humour, I have watched you steadily fall. Fifteen years ago you would have started at a theft. Three years back you would have blenched at the name of murder. Is there any crime, is there any cruelty or meanness, from which you still recoil?—five years from now I shall detect you in the fact! Downward, downward, lies your way; nor can anything but death avail to stop you."

"It is true," Markheim said huskily, "I have in some degree complied with evil. But it is so with all: the very saints, in the mere exercise of living, grow less dainty, and take on the tone of their surroundings."

"I will propound to you one simple question," said the other; "and as you answer, I shall read to you your moral horoscope. You have grown in many things more lax; possibly you do right to be so; and at any account, it is the same with all men. But granting that, are you in any one particular, however trifling, more difficult to please with your own conduct, or do you go in all things with a looser rein?"

"In any one?" repeated Markheim, with an anguish of consideration. "No," he added, with despair, "in none! I have gone down in all."

"Then," said the visitor, "content yourself with what you are, for you will never change; and the words of your part on this stage are irrevocably written down."

Markheim stood for a long while silent, and indeed it was the visitor who first broke the silence. "That being so," he said, "shall I show you the money?"

"And grace?" cried Markheim.

"Have you not tried it?" returned the other. "Two or three years ago, did I not see you on the platform of revival meetings, and was not your voice the loudest in the hymn?"

"It is true," said Markheim; "and I see clearly what remains for me by way of duty. I thank you for these lessons from my soul; my eyes are opened, and I behold myself at last for what I am."

At this moment, the sharp note of the door-bell rang through the house; and the visitant, as though this were some concerted signal for which he had been waiting, changed at once in his demeanour.

"The maid!" he cried. "She has returned, as I forewarned you, and there is now before you one more difficult passage. Her master, you must say, is ill; you must let her in, with an assured but rather serious countenance—no smiles, no overacting, and I promise you success! Once the girl within, and the door closed, the same dexterity that has already rid you of the dealer will relieve you of this last danger in your path. Thenceforward you have the whole evening—the whole night, if needful—to ransack the treasures of the house and to make good your safety. This is help that comes to you with the mask of danger. Up!" he cried: "up, friend; your life hangs trembling in the scales: up, and act!"

Markheim steadily regarded his counsellor. "If I be condemned to evil acts," he said, "there is still one door of freedom open—I can cease from action. If my life be an ill thing, I can lay it down. Though I be, as you say truly, at the beck of every small temptation, I can yet, by one decisive gesture, place myself beyond the reach of all. My love of good is damned to barrenness; it may, and let it be!

But I have still my hatred of evil; and from that, to your galling disappointment, you shall see that I can draw both energy and courage."

The features of the visitor began to undergo a wonderful and lovely change: they brightened and softened with a tender triumph; and, even as they brightened, faded and dislimned. But Markheim did not pause to watch or understand the transformation. He opened the door and went down-stairs very slowly, thinking to himself. His past went soberly before him; he beheld it as it was, ugly and strenuous like a dream, random as chance-medley—a scene of defeat. Life, as he thus reviewed it, tempted him no longer; but on the farther side he perceived a quiet haven for his bark. He paused in the passage, and looked into the shop, where the candle still burned by the dead body. It was strangely silent. Thoughts of the dealer swarmed into his mind, as he stood gazing. And then the bell once more broke out into impatient clamour.

He confronted the maid upon the threshold with something like a smile.

"You had better go for the police," said he: "I have killed your master."

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XVII

1890 TO 1895:

L'Inutile Beauté, Guy de Maupassant (1890).
Up the Coulée, Hamlin Garland (1890).
Without Benefit of Clergy, Rudyard Kipling (1890).
Gallegher, and Other Stories, Richard Harding Davis (1891).
Nouveaux Pastels, Paul Bourget (1891).
Life's Handicap, Rudyard Kipling (1891).
Main-Travelled Roads, Hamlin Garland (1891).
Cœur Double, Marcel Schwob (1891).
A New England Nun, Mary E. Wilkins (1891).
Short Sixes, H. C. Bunner (1891).
Pages, Stéphane Mallarmé (1891).
Troll, Jonas Lie (1891–1892).
Van Bibber and Others, Richard Harding Davis (1892).
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, A. Conan Doyle (1892).
Lettres de Femmes, Marcel Prévost (1892).
Cuore, Edmondo de Amicis (1892).
A Group of Noble Dames, Thomas Hardy (1892).
To Sterke, Peter Egge (1892).
Af Norges Historie, Jacob Hilditch (1892).
The Lesson of the Master, Henry James (1892).
The Beach of Falesá, R. L. Stevenson (1892).
Noughts and Crosses, A. T. Quiller-Couch (1893).
The King in Yellow, Robert W. Chambers (1893).
The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, A. Conan Doyle (1893).
Renunciations, Frederick Wedmore (1893).
Many Inventions, Rudyard Kipling (1893).
The Real Thing, Henry James (1893).
A Native of Winby, S. O. Jewett (1893).

The Delectable Duchy, A. T. Quiller-Couch (1894).
The Upper Berth, F. Marion Crawford (1894).
Nouvelles Lettres de Femmes, Marcel Prévost (1894).
Contes Tout Simples, François Coppée (1894).
English Episodes, Frederick Wedmore (1894).
Tales of Mean Streets, Arthur Morrison (1894).
Life's Little Ironies, Thomas Hardy (1894).
Mrs. Knollys, and Other Stories, Frederic Jessup Stimson (1894).
In the Midst of Life, Ambrose Bierce (1894).
The Jungle Books, Rudyard Kipling (1894–1895).

A COWARD

A COWARD

A COWARD, by Guy de Maupassant (1850–1893), is one of the stories in the collection called Stories of Day and Night (Contes du Jour et de la Nuit), published in Paris in 1885. The list of Maupassant's Short Stories is a long one. His first was Tallow-Ball (Boule de Suif), which appeared in 1880 in the collection of stories by different authors entitled Les Soirées de Médan. Then he published in rapid succession the volumes La Maison Tellier (1881), Mademoiselle Fifi (1882), Miss Harriet (1884), Moonlight (1884), Monsieur Parent (1886), The Horla (1887), etc.; and not a year passed that he did not add one or more volumes to the list until his death in 1893.

Not even Flaubert sought more tirelessly for the phrase that just expresses and for the inevitable word than did his disciple, Maupassant. Says Arthur Symons: "His appeal is genuine, and his skill, of its kind, incontestable. He attracts, as certain men do, by a warm and blunt plausibility. He is so frank, and seems so broad; and is so skilful, and seems so living. All the exterior heat of life is in his work; and this exterior heat gives a more immediate illusion of what we call real life than the profound inner vitality of, let us say, Hawthorne." Maupassant's art, which makes the steps of such a story as A Coward seem those of an inevitable progression, will save his work from ever becoming the mere human document of naturalism, as is the fiction of many of the writers of the naturalistic school. "We do not know too much," says Pellissier,

" of the fate that will come hereafter to many stories produced in the nineteenth century. I mean even those of Balzac or George Sand, of Zola or Alphonse Daudet. But we can now be assured that among the stories of Maupassant there are at least twenty or thirty that will not perish."

The present version of A Coward is that by George Burnham Ives, in the Maupassant volume of the Little French Masterpieces series.

AUTHORITIES:

Partial Portraits, by Henry James.

Guy de Maupassant, by Arthur Symons (Little French Masterpieces series).

Preface to Pierre et Jean, by Guy de Maupassant.

History of the French Language and Literature, by Louis Petit de Julleville.

A COWARD

He was known in society as "the handsome Signoles." His name was Viscount Gontran Joseph de Signoles.

An orphan and the possessor of a sufficient fortune, he ut a dash, as they say. He had style and presence, suffi- ient fluency of speech to make people think him clever, a ertain natural grace, an air of nobility and pride, a gallant ıustache and a gentle eye, which the women like.

He was in great demand in the salons, much sought fter by fair dancers; and he aroused in his own sex that miling animosity which they always feel for men of an en- rgetic figure. He had been suspected of several love-affairs ell adapted to cause a young bachelor to be much esteemed. Ie passed a happy, unconcerned life, in a comfort of mind hich was most complete. He was known to be a skilful encer, and with the pistol even more adept.

"If I ever fight a duel," he would say, "I shall choose ıe pistol. With that weapon I am sure of killing my man."

Now, one evening, when he had accompanied to the heatre two young lady friends of his, whose husbands also ere of the party, he invited them, after the play, to take n ice at Tortoni's. They had been at the café but a few ıoments, when he noticed that a man sitting at a table near y was staring persistently at one of his fair neighbours. he seemed annoyed and uneasy, and lowered her eyes. At ıst she said to her husband:

"That man is staring me out of countenance. I don't now him; do you?"

The husband, who had noticed nothing, raised his eyes, nd answered:

"No, not at all."

The young woman continued, half smiling, half vexed: "It is very unpleasant; that man is spoiling my ice."

The husband shrugged his shoulders:

"Pshaw! don't pay any attention to him. If we had to bother our heads about all the impertinent fellows we meet, we should never have done."

But the viscount had risen abruptly. He could not suffer that stranger to spoil an ice which he had offered. It was to him that the affront was paid, since it was through him and for him that his friends had entered the café, so that the affair was his concern, and his alone.

He walked towards the man and said to him:

"You have a way of looking at those ladies, monsieur, that I cannot tolerate. I beg you to be so kind as to stare less persistently."

The other retorted:

"You may go to the devil!"

"Take care, monsieur," said the viscount, with clenched teeth; "you will force me to pass bounds."

The gentleman answered but one word, a foul word, that rang from one end of the café to the other, and caused every guest to give a sudden start, as if moved by a hidden spring. Those whose backs were turned wheeled round; all the others raised their heads; three waiters whirled about on their heels like tops; the two women at the desk gave a jump, then turned completely round, like automata obedient to the same crank.

Profound silence ensued. Suddenly a sharp sound cracked in the air. The viscount had slapped his adversary. Every one rose to interfere. Cards were exchanged between the two.

When the viscount had returned to his apartment he paced the floor for several minutes, with great, quick strides. He was too much agitated to reflect. A single thought hovered over his mind—"a duel"—without arousing any emotion whatsoever. He had done what he should have done; he had shown himself to be what he ought to be. His conduct would be discussed and approved; people would congratulate him. He said aloud, speaking as one speaks when one's thoughts are in great confusion:

"What a brute the fellow was!"

Then he sat down and began to consider. He must find

seconds, in the morning. Whom should he choose? He thought over those of his acquaintances who were the most highly esteemed and the best-known. He decided at last upon the Marquis de la Tour-Noire and the Colonel Bourdin—a great noble and a soldier—excellent! Their names would sound well in the papers. He discovered that he was thirsty, and he drank three glasses of water in rapid succession; then he resumed his pacing of the floor. He felt full of energy. If he blustered a little, seemed determined to carry the thing through, demanded rigorous and dangerous conditions, insisted upon a serious duel, very serious and terrible, his adversary would probably back down and apologise.

He picked up the card, which he had drawn from his pocket and tossed on the table, and read it again, as he had read it in a glance at the café, and again in the cab, by the glimmer of every street-lamp, on his way home. "Georges Lamil, 51 Rue Moncey." Nothing more.

He examined these assembled letters, which seemed to him mysterious, full of vague meaning. Georges Lamil! Who was this man? What was his business? Why had he stared at that lady in such a way? Was it not disgusting that a stranger, an unknown, should cause such a change in one's life, because it had pleased him to fasten his eyes insolently upon a lady?

And the viscount again exclaimed aloud:

"What a brute!"

Then he stood perfectly still, thinking, his eyes still glued to the card. There arose within him a fierce anger against that bit of paper—a malevolent sort of rage, blended with a strange feeling of discomfort. What a stupid business! He took a penknife that lay open to his hand, and stuck it through the middle of the printed name, as if he were stabbing some one.

So he must fight! Should he choose swords, or pistols? —for he deemed himself the insulted party. He ran less risk with the sword; but with the pistol he had a chance of making his opponent withdraw. A duel with swords is rarely fatal, mutual prudence preventing the combatants from engaging near enough to each other for a point to enter very deep. With the pistol his life was seriously endan-

gered; but he might in that way come out of the affair with all the honours, and without coming to a meeting.

"I must be firm," he said. "He will be afraid."

The sound of his voice made him tremble, and he looked about him. He felt extremely nervous. He drank another glass of water, then began to undress for bed.

As soon as he was in bed he blew out the light and shut his eyes.

He thought:

"I have all day to-morrow to arrange my affairs. I must sleep now, so that I may be calm."

He was very warm under the bedclothes, but he could not manage to doze off. He twisted and turned, lay on his back five minutes, then changed to the left side, then rolled over on his right.

He was still thirsty. He got up again, to drink. Then a disquieting thought occurred to him:

"Can it be that I am afraid?"

Why did his heart begin to beat wildly at every familiar sound in the room? When the clock was about to strike, the faint whirring of the spring making ready made him jump; and then he had to keep his mouth open for several seconds to breathe, the oppression was so great.

He commenced to argue with himself concerning the possibility of this thing:

"Am I afraid?"

No, of course he was not afraid, as he had determined to carry the thing through, as his mind was fully made up to fight, and not to tremble. But he felt so profoundly troubled that he asked himself the question:

"Is it possible to be afraid in spite of one's self?"

And that doubt, that disquietude, that dread took possession of him; if some force stronger than his will, a dominating, irresistible power should conquer him, what would happen? Yes, what could happen? He certainly would go to the ground, inasmuch as he had made up his mind to go there. But suppose his hand should tremble? Suppose he should faint? And he thought of his position, of his reputation, of his name.

And suddenly a strange fancy seized him to get up, in order to look in the mirror. He relit his candle. When he

ıw the reflection of his face in the polished glass, he could ardly recognise himself, and it seemed to him that he had ever seen this man before. His eyes appeared enormous; nd he was certainly pale—yes, very pale.

He remained standing in front of the mirror. He put ut his tongue as if to test the state of his health, and of a ıdden this thought burst into his mind like a bullet:

"The day after to-morrow, at this time, I may be dead."

And his heart began to beat furiously again.

"The day after to-morrow, at this time, I may be dead. 'his person in front of me, this I, whom I am looking at in ıis mirror, will be no more! What! I am standing here, ɔoking at myself, conscious that I am a living man; and ı twenty-four hours I shall be lying on that bed, dead, with ıy eyes closed, cold, lifeless, gone!"

He turned towards the bed, and he distinctly saw him-ɛlf lying on his back, between the very sheets that he had ıst left. He had the hollow cheeks that dead bodies have, nd that slackness of the hands that will never stir more.

Thereupon he conceived a fear of his bed, and, in order ɔ avoid looking at it, passed into his smoking-room. He ıechanically took a cigar, lighted it, and began to pace the oor anew. He was cold; he walked to the bell-cord to ake his valet; but he stopped, with his hand half-way to ıe cord.

"That fellow will see that I am afraid."

And he did not ring, but made the fire himself. His ands trembled slightly, with a nervous shudder, when they ɔuched anything. His brain was in a whirl; his troubled ıoughts became fugitive, sudden, melancholy; a sort of in-ɔxication seized on his spirit as if he had been drunk.

And ceaselessly he asked himself:

"What am I going to do? What will become of me?"

His whole body quivered, shaken by jerky tremblings. [e got up, went to the window, and drew aside the curtains. he day was breaking, a summer's day. The rosy sky made ɔsy the city, the roofs, and the walls. A great burst of ght, like a caress from the rising sun, enveloped the waking world; and with that glimmer, a sudden, enlivening, rutal hope seized on the heart of the viscount. How in-ıne he was to have allowed himself to be so struck down

by terror, even before anything was decided, before his seconds had met those of Georges Lamil, before he knew whether he was really to fight!

He made his toilet, dressed himself, and left the house with a firm step.

As he walked, he said to himself again and again:

"I must be firm, very firm. I must prove that I am not afraid."

His seconds, the marquis and the colonel, placed themselves at his disposal, and after warmly shaking his hand, discussed the conditions.

The colonel asked:

"Do you desire a serious duel?"

"Very serious," the viscount replied.

"You insist upon pistols?"

"Yes."

"Do you leave us at liberty to make the other arrangements?"

The viscount articulated with a dry, jerky voice:

"Twenty paces, firing at the word, lifting the arm instead of lowering it. Shots to be exchanged until some one is badly wounded."

"Those are excellent conditions," said the colonel, in a tone of satisfaction. "You are a good shot; the chances are all in your favour."

And they separated. The viscount returned home to wait for them. His agitation, which had been temporarily allayed, increased from moment to moment. He felt along his arms and legs, in his chest, a sort of shudder, an incessant vibration; he could not keep still, either sitting or standing. He had only a trace of moisture in his mouth, and he moved his tongue noisily every second, as if to unglue it from his palate.

He tried to breakfast, but he could not eat. Thereupon it occurred to him to drink to renew his courage, and he ordered a small decanter of rum, from which he gulped down six little glasses, one after another. A warmth, like that caused by a burn, invaded his whole frame, followed as soon by a giddiness of the soul.

"I have found the way," he thought; "now it is all right."

But in an hour he had emptied the decanter, and his agi-

tation became intolerable. He was conscious of a frantic longing to throw himself on the floor, to cry, to bite. Evening fell.

A ring at the bell caused him such a feeling of suffocation that he had not the strength to rise and receive his seconds.

He did not dare even to talk to them any longer—to say: "How do you do?" to utter a single word, for fear that they would divine everything from the trembling of his voice.

"Everything is arranged according to the conditions that you fixed," said the colonel. "At first, your adversary claimed the privileges of the insulted party, but he gave way almost immediately and assented to everything. His seconds are two military men."

The viscount said:

"Thank you."

The marquis added:

"Excuse us if we stay but a moment, but we still have a thousand things to attend to. We must have a good doctor, as the duel is not to stop until somebody is severely wounded; and you know there's no trifling with bullets. We must arrange about the place, too—near a house to which the wounded man may be taken if necessary, etc.; in short, we still have two or three hours' work before us."

The viscount succeeded in articulating a second time:

"Thank you."

The colonel asked:

"You are all right? quite calm?"

"Yes, quite calm, thanks."

The two men withdrew.

When he was alone once more it seemed to him that he was going mad. His servant having lighted the lamps, he seated himself at his table to write some letters. After tracing at the top of a page: "This is my Will," he rose with a jump and walked away, feeling incapable of putting two ideas together, of forming any resolution, of deciding any question whatsoever.

So he was really going to fight! It was no longer possible for him to avoid it. What on earth was taking place in him? He wanted to fight; his purpose and determination

to do so were firmly fixed; and yet he knew full well that, despite all the effort of his mind and all the tension of his will, he would be unable to retain even the strength necessary to take him to the place of meeting. He tried to fancy the combat, his own attitude, and the bearing of his adversary.

From time to time his teeth chattered with a little dry noise. He tried to read, and took up Châteauvillard's duelling-code. Then he asked himself:

"Has my opponent frequented the shooting-galleries? Is he well-known? What's his class? How can I find out?"

He remembered Baron de Vaux's book on pistol-shooters, and he looked it through from end to end. Georges Lamil's name was not mentioned. But if the fellow were not a good shot, he would not have assented so readily to that dangerous weapon and those fatal conditions! As he passed a table, he opened the case by Gastinne Renette, took out one of the pistols, then stood as if he were about to fire, and raised his arm. But he was trembling from head to foot, and the barrel shook in all directions.

Then he said to himself:

"It is impossible. I cannot fight like this!"

He regarded the little hole, black and deep, at the end of the barrel, the hole that spits out death; he thought of the dishonour, of the whispered comments at the clubs, of the laughter in the salons, of the disdain of the women, of the allusions in the newspapers, of the insults which cowards would throw in his face.

He continued to gaze at the weapon, and as he raised the hammer, he saw the priming glitter beneath it like a little red flame. The pistol had been left loaded, by chance, by oversight. And he experienced a confused, inexplicable joy thereat.

If he did not display in the other's presence the calm and noble bearing suited to the occasion, he would be lost forever. He would be disgraced, branded with the sign of infamy, hunted from society! And that calm and bold bearing he could not command—he knew it, he felt it. And yet he was really brave, because he wanted to fight! He was brave, because—. The thought that grazed his mind was never completed; opening his mouth wide, he suddenly thrust the

barrel of the pistol into the very bottom of his throat and pressed upon the trigger.

When his valet ran in, alarmed by the report, he found him on his back, dead. The blood had spattered the white paper on the table, and made a great red stain under the four words:

"This is my Will."

A LIST OF REPRESENTATIVE TALES AND SHORT STORIES

XVIII

1895 TO 1903:

The Golden Age, Kenneth Grahame (1895).
The Brushwood Boy, Rudyard Kipling (1895).
Down Dartmoor Way, Eden Phillpotts (1895).
Earthwork out of Tuscany, Maurice Hewlett (1895).
Tchelkache, Maxime Gorky (1895).
Terminations, Henry James (1895).
Recommencements, Paul Bourget (1897).
The Secret Rose, W. B. Yeats (1897).
Thirty Strange Stories, H. G. Wells (1897).
Contes de la Décadence Romaine, Jean Richepin (1898).
The Day's Work, Rudyard Kipling (1898).
Tales of Unrest, Joseph Conrad (1898).
The Two Magics, Henry James (1898).
Tales of Space and Time, H. G. Wells (1899).
The Greater Inclination, Edith Wharton (1899).
Little Novels of Italy, Maurice Hewlett (1899).
The Touchstone, Edith Wharton (1900).
The Green Flag, A. Conan Doyle (1900).
Old Fires and Profitable Ghosts, A. T. Quiller-Couch (1900).
The Soft Side, Henry James (1900).
Old Chester Tales, Margaret Deland (1901).
The Striking Hours, Eden Phillpotts (1901).
Understudies, Mary E. Wilkins (1901).
Crucial Instances, Edith Wharton (1901).
The White Wolf, A. T. Quiller-Couch (1902).
The Blue Flower, Henry Van Dyke (1902).
Youth, Joseph Conrad (1902).
The Better Sort, Henry James (1903).
La Lampe de Psyché, Marcel Schwob (1903).

Falk, Joseph Conrad (1903).
The Untilled Field, George Moore (1903).
Contes pour les Jours de Fête, François Coppée (1903).
Trent's Trust, and Other Stories, Bret Harte (1903).
Philosophy 4, Owen Wister (1903).

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY

RUDYARD KIPLING'S (1865–) first volume of Short ıries was Plain Tales from the Hills (1888). After the ılication of that volume his work may be said to have ıdily grown in power until the publication of Life's ndicap (1891), which probably marks the apogee both his art and of his reputation. Perhaps since then he ; done work as good, but the best stories of that vol- e have not since been surpassed either by Kipling or any other English writer; for Life's Handicap con- ıs these masterpieces: The Courting of Dinah Shadd 390), The Man Who Was (1890), Without Benefit of :rgy (1890), At the End of the Passage (1891). The st important of Kipling's remaining Short Stories haps are: The Man Who Would Be King (1888), e Drums of the Fore and Aft (1888), Beyond the le (1888), The Brushwood Boy (1895), They (1904), l the stories contained in The Jungle Books (1894– 95), Puck of Pook's Hill (1904), and Rewards and iries (1910).

Without Benefit of Clergy was first published in the ıe, 1890, number of Macmillan's Magazine (Lon- ı), and in the June 7th and 14th numbers of rper's Weekly (New York), 1890. Later in the ıe year it was republished in the volume enti- l The Courting of Dinah Shadd, and Other Sto- s. In 1891 it was republished in the volume, e's Handicap. Certainly it is unsurpassed among ling's Short Stories; it strongly presents both his ef merits and his particular characteristics. "The nulous passion of Ameera," says Edmund Gosse,

" her hopes, her fears, and her agonies of disapp ment, combine to form by far the most tender page w Mr. Kipling has written." Love stories of such rar this have been given us only by the greatest writers, that Kipling has added one to the not too large thology is testimony both to his genius and to the p of the modern Short Story.

AUTHORITIES:

Rudyard Kipling: A Criticism, by Richard Le lienne; with a bibliography by John Lane.

Questions at Issue, by Edmund Gosse.

A Kipling Primer, by Frederic L. Knowles.

The Short Story in English, by Henry Seidel C (Chapter XVIII).

WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY

Before my Spring I garnered Autumn's gain,
Out of her time my field was white with grain,
The year gave up her secrets to my woe.
Forced and deflowered each sick season lay,
In mystery of increase and decay;
I saw the sunset ere men saw the day,
Who am too wise in that I should not know.

Bitter Waters.

I

"But if it be a girl?"

"Lord of my life, it cannot be. I have prayed for so many nights, and sent gifts to Sheikh Badl's shrine so often, that I know God will give us a son—a man-child that shall grow into a man. Think of this and be glad. My mother shall be his mother till I can take him again, and the mullah of the Pearl mosque shall cast his nativity—God send he be born in an auspicious hour!—and then, and then thou wilt never weary of me, thy slave."

"Since when hast thou been a slave, my queen?"

"Since the beginning—till this mercy came to me. How could I be sure of thy love when I knew that I had been bought with silver?"

"Nay, that was the dowry. I paid it to thy mother."

"And she has buried it, and sits upon it all day long like a hen. What talk is yours of dower! I was bought as though I had been a Lucknow dancing-girl instead of a child."

"Art thou sorry for the sale?"

"I have sorrowed; but to-day I am glad. Thou wilt never cease to love me now?—answer, my king."

"Never—never. No."

"Not even though the *mem-log*—the white women of thy

own blood—love thee? And remember, I have watched them driving in the evening; they are very fair."

"I have seen fire-balloons by the hundred. I have seen the moon, and—then I saw no more fire-balloons."

Ameera clapped her hands and laughed. "Very good talk," she said. Then with an assumption of great stateliness: "It is enough. Thou hast my permission to depart—if thou wilt."

The man did not move. He was sitting on a low red-lacquered couch in a room furnished only with a blue and white floor-cloth, some rugs, and a very complete collection of native cushions. At his feet sat a woman of sixteen, and she was all but all the world in his eyes. By every rule and law she should have been otherwise, for he was an Englishman, and she a Mussulman's daughter bought two years before from her mother, who, being left without money, would have sold Ameera shrieking to the Prince of Darkness if the price had been sufficient.

It was a contract entered into with a light heart; but even before the girl had reached her bloom she came to fill the greater portion of John Holden's life. For her, and the withered hag her mother, he had taken a little house overlooking the great red-walled city, and found—when the marigolds had sprung up by the well in the courtyard and Ameera had established herself according to her own ideas of comfort, and her mother had ceased grumbling at the inadequacy of the cooking-places, the distance from the daily market, and at matters of housekeeping in general—that the house was to him his home. Any one could enter his bachelor's bungalow by day or night, and the life that he led there was an unlovely one. In the house in the city his feet only could pass beyond the outer courtyard to the women's rooms; and when the big wooden gate was bolted behind him he was king in his own territory, with Ameera for queen. And there was going to be added to this kingdom a third person whose arrival Holden felt inclined to resent. It interfered with his perfect happiness. It disarranged the orderly peace of the house that was his own. But Ameera was wild with delight at the thought of it, and her mother not less so. The love of a man, and particularly a white man, was at the best an inconstant affair, but it might, both women argued, be held

fast by a baby's hands. "And then," Ameera would always say, "then he will never care for the white *mem-log*. I hate them all—I hate them all."

"He will go back to his own people in time," said the mother; "but by the blessing of God that time is yet afar off."

Holden sat silent on the couch thinking of the future, and his thoughts were not pleasant. The drawbacks of a double life are manifold. The Government, with singular care, had ordered him out of the station for a fortnight on special duty in the place of a man who was watching by the bedside of a sick wife. The verbal notification of the transfer had been edged by a cheerful remark that Holden ought to think himself lucky in being a bachelor and a free man. He came to break the news to Ameera.

"It is not good," she said slowly, "but it is not all bad. There is my mother here, and no harm will come to me—unless indeed I die of pure joy. Go thou to thy work and think no troublesome thoughts. When the days are done I believe . . . nay, I am sure. And—and then I shall lay *him* in thy arms, and thou wilt love me forever. The train goes to-night, at midnight is it not? Go now, and do not let thy heart be heavy by cause of me. But thou wilt not delay in returning? Thou wilt not stay on the road to talk to the bold white *mem-log*. Come back to me swiftly, my life."

As he left the courtyard to reach his horse that was tethered to the gate-post, Holden spoke to the white-haired old watchman who guarded the house, and bade him under certain contingencies despatch the filled-up telegraph-form that Holden gave him. It was all that could be done, and with the sensations of a man who has attended his own funeral Holden went away by the night mail to his exile. Every hour of the day he dreaded the arrival of the telegram, and every hour of the night he pictured to himself the death of Ameera. In consequence his work for the state was not of first-rate quality, nor was his temper towards his colleagues of the most amiable. The fortnight ended without a sign from his home, and, torn to pieces by his anxieties, Holden returned to be swallowed up for two precious hours by a dinner at the club, wherein he heard, as a man hears in a swoon, voices telling him how execrably he had performed the other man's duties,

and how he had endeared himself to all his associates. Then he fled on horseback through the night with his heart in his mouth. There was no answer at first to his blows on the gate, and he had just wheeled his horse round to kick it in when Pir Khan appeared with a lantern and held his stirrup.

"Has aught occurred?" said Holden.

"The news does not come from my mouth, Protector of the Poor, but—" He held out his shaking hand as befitted the bearer of good news who is entitled to a reward.

Holden hurried through the courtyard. A light burned in the upper room. His horse neighed in the gateway, and he heard a shrill little wail that sent all the blood into the apple of his throat. It was a new voice, but it did not prove that Ameera was alive.

"Who is there?" he called up the narrow brick staircase.

There was a cry of delight from Ameera, and then the voice of the mother, tremulous with old age and pride—"We be two women and—the—man—thy—son."

On the threshold of the room Holden stepped on a naked dagger, that was laid there to avert ill-luck, and it broke at the hilt under his impatient heel.

"God is great!" cooed Ameera in the half-light. "Thou hast taken his misfortunes on thy head."

"Ay, but how is it with thee, life of my life? Old woman, how is it with her?"

"She has forgotten her sufferings for joy that the child is born. There is no harm; but speak softly," said the mother.

"It only needed thy presence to make me all well," said Ameera. "My king, thou hast been very long away. What gifts hast thou for me? Ah, ah! It is I that bring gifts this time. Look, my life, look. Was there ever such a babe? Nay, I am too weak even to clear my arm from him."

"Rest then, and do not talk. I am here, *bachari* [little woman]."

"Well said, for there is a bond and a heel-rope [*peecharee*] between us now that nothing can break. Look—canst thou see in this light? He is without spot or blemish. Never was such a man-child. *Ya illah!* he shall be a pundit—no, a trooper of the Queen. And, my life, dost thou love me as well as ever, though I am faint and sick and worn? Answer truly."

"Yea. I love as I have loved, with all my soul. Lie still, pearl, and rest."

"Then do not go. Sit by my side here—so. Mother, the lord of this house needs a cushion. Bring it." There was an almost imperceptible movement on the part of the new life that lay in the hollow of Ameera's arm. "Aho!" she said, her voice breaking with love. "The babe is a champion from his birth. He is kicking me in the side with mighty kicks. Was there ever such a babe! And he is ours to us—thine and mine. Put thy hand on his head, but carefully, for he is very young, and men are unskilled in such matters."

Very cautiously Holden touched with the tips of his fingers the downy head.

"He is of the Faith," said Ameera; "for lying here in the night-watches I whispered the Call to Prayer and the Profession of Faith into his ears. And it is most marvellous that he was born upon a Friday, as I was born. Be careful of him, my life; but he can almost grip with his hands."

Holden found one helpless little hand that closed feebly on his finger. And the clutch ran through his body till it settled about his heart. Till then his sole thought had been for Ameera. He began to realise that there was some one else in the world, but he could not feel that it was a veritable son with a soul. He sat down to think, and Ameera dozed lightly.

"Get hence, *sahib*," said her mother under her breath. "It is not good that she should find you here on waking. She must be still."

"I go," said Holden submissively. "Here be rupees. See that my *baba* gets fat and finds all that he needs."

The chink of the silver roused Ameera. "I am his mother, and no hireling," she said weakly. "Shall I look to him more or less for the sake of money? Mother, give it back. I have borne my lord a son."

The deep sleep of weakness came upon her almost before the sentence was completed. Holden went down to the courtyard very softly, with his heart at ease. Pir Khan, the old watchman, was chuckling with delight. "This house is now complete," he said, and without further comment thrust into Holden's hands the hilt of a sabre worn many years ago

when he, Pir Khan, served the Queen in the police. The bleat of a tethered goat came from the well-curb.

"There be two," said Pir Khan, "two goats of the best. I bought them, and they cost much money; and since there is no birth-party assembled their flesh will be all mine. Strike craftily, *sahib!* 'T is an ill-balanced sabre at the best. Wait till they raise their heads from cropping the marigolds."

"And why?" said Holden, bewildered.

"For the birth-sacrifice. What else? Otherwise the child being unguarded from fate may die. The Protector of the Poor knows the fitting words to be said."

Holden had learned them once with little thought that he would ever speak them in earnest. The touch of the cold sabre-hilt in his palm turned suddenly to the clinging grip of the child up-stairs—the child that was his own son—and a dread of loss filled him.

"Strike!" said Pir Khan. "Never life came into the world but life was paid for it. See, the goats have raised their heads. Now! With a drawing cut!"

Hardly knowing what he did Holden cut twice as he muttered the Mohammedan prayer that runs: "Almighty! In place of this my son I offer life for life, blood for blood, head for head, bone for bone, hair for hair, skin for skin." The waiting horse snorted and bounded in his pickets at the smell of the raw blood that spirted over Holden's riding-boots.

"Well smitten!" said Pir Khan, wiping the sabre. "A swordsman was lost in thee. Go with a light heart, heaven-born. I am thy servant, and the servant of thy son. May the Presence live a thousand years and . . . the flesh of the goats is all mine?" Pir Khan drew back richer by a month's pay. Holden swung himself into the saddle and rode off through the low-hanging wood-smoke of the evening. He was full of riotous exultation, alternating with a vast vague tenderness directed towards no particular object, that made him choke as he bent over the neck of his uneasy horse. "I never felt like this in my life," he thought. "I'll go to the club and pull myself together."

A game of pool was beginning, and the room was full of men. Holden entered, eager to get to the light and the company of his fellows, singing at the top of his voice:

"'In Baltimore a-walking, a lady I did meet!'"

"Did you?" said the club-secretary from his corner. "Did she happen to tell you that your boots were wringing wet? Great goodness, man, it's blood!"

"Bosh!" said Holden, picking his cue from the rack. "May I cut in? It's dew. I've been riding through high crops. My faith! my boots are in a mess, though!"

"'And if it be a girl she shall wear a wedding-ring,
And if it be a boy he shall fight for his king,
With his dirk, and his cap, and his little jacket blue,
He shall walk the quarter-deck——'"

"Yellow on blue—green next player," said the marker monotonously.

"'*He shall walk the quarter-deck*'—Am I green, marker? —'*He shall walk the quarter-deck*'—eh! that's a bad shot—'*As his daddy used to do!*'"

"I don't see that you have anything to crow about," said a zealous junior civilian acidly. "The Government is not exactly pleased with your work when you relieved Sanders."

"Does that mean a wigging from headquarters?" said Holden with an abstracted smile. "I think I can stand it."

The talk beat up round the ever-fresh subject of each man's work, and steadied Holden till it was time to go to his dark empty bungalow, where his butler received him as one who knew all his affairs. Holden remained awake for the greater part of the night, and his dreams were pleasant ones.

II

"How old is he now?"

"*Ya illah!* What a man's question! He is all but six weeks old; and on this night I go up to the housetop with thee, my life, to count the stars. For that is auspicious. And he was born on a Friday under the sign of the Sun, and it has been told to me that he will outlive us both and get wealth. Can we wish for aught better, beloved?"

"There is nothing better. Let us go up to the roof, and thou shalt count the stars—but a few only, for the sky is heavy with cloud."

"The winter rains are late, and maybe they come out of season. Come, before all the stars are hid. I have put on my richest jewels."

"Thou hast forgotten the best of all."

"*Ai!* Ours. He comes also. He has never yet seen the skies."

Ameera climbed the narrow staircase that led to the flat roof. The child, placid and unwinking, lay in the hollow of her right arm, gorgeous in silver-fringed muslin with a small skull-cap on his head. Ameera wore all that she valued most. The diamond nose-stud that takes the place of the Western patch in drawing attention to the curve of the nostril, the gold ornament in the centre of the forehead studded with tallow-drop emeralds and flawed rubies, the heavy circlet of beaten gold that was fastened round her neck by the softness of the pure metal, and the chinking curb-patterned silver anklets hanging low over the rosy ankle-bone. She was dressed in jade-green muslin as befitted a daughter of the Faith, and from shoulder to elbow and elbow to wrist ran bracelets of silver tied with floss silk, frail glass bangles slipped over the wrist in proof of the slenderness of the hand, and certain heavy gold bracelets that had no part in her country's ornaments but, since they were Holden's gift and fastened with a cunning European snap, delighted her immensely.

They sat down by the low white parapet of the roof, overlooking the city and its lights.

"They are happy down there," said Ameera. "But I do not think that they are as happy as we. Nor do I think the white *mem-log* are as happy. And thou?"

"I know they are not."

"How dost thou know?"

"They give their children over to the nurses."

"I have never seen that," said Ameera with a sigh, "nor do I wish to see. *Ahi!*"—she dropped her head on Holden's shoulder— "I have counted forty stars, and I am tired. Look at the child, love of my life, he is counting too."

The baby was staring with round eyes at the dark of the heavens. Ameera placed him in Holden's arms, and he lay there without a cry.

"What shall we call him among ourselves?" she said.

"Look! Art thou ever tired of looking? He carries thy very eyes. But the mouth——"

"Is thine, most dear. Who should know better than I?"

"'Tis such a feeble mouth. Oh, so small! And yet it holds my heart between its lips. Give him to me now. He has been too long away."

"Nay, let him lie; he has not yet begun to cry."

"When he cries thou wilt give him back—eh? What a man of mankind thou art! If he cried he were only the dearer to me. But, my life, what little name shall we give him?"

The small body lay close to Holden's heart. It was utterly helpless and very soft. He scarcely dared to breathe for fear of crushing it. The caged green parrot that is regarded as a sort of guardian spirit in most native households moved on its perch and fluttered a drowsy wing.

"There is the answer," said Holden. "Mian Mittu has spoken. He shall be the parrot. When he is ready he will talk mightily and run about. Mian Mittu is the parrot in thy —in the Mussulman tongue, is it not?"

"Why put me so far off?" said Ameera fretfully. "Let it be like unto some English name—but not wholly. For he is mine."

"Then call him Tota, for that is likest English."

"Ay, Tota, and that is still the parrot. Forgive me, my lord, for a minute ago, but in truth he is too little to wear all the weight of Mian Mittu for name. He shall be Tota—our Tota to us. Hearest thou, O small one? Littlest, thou art Tota." She touched the child's cheek, and he waking wailed, and it was necessary to return him to his mother, who soothed him with the wonderful rhyme of *"Aré koko, Jaré koko!"* which says:

"Oh, crow! Go crow! Baby's sleeping sound,
And the wild plums grow in the jungle, only a penny a pound,
Only a penny a pound, *baba*, only a penny a pound."

Reassured many times as to the price of those plums, Tota cuddled himself down to sleep. The two sleek, white well-bullocks in the courtyard were steadily chewing the cud of their evening meal; old Pir Khan squatted at the head of Holden's horse, his police sabre across his knees, pulling

drowsily at a big water-pipe that croaked like a bullfrog in a pond. Ameera's mother sat spinning in the lower veranda, and the wooden gate was shut and barred. The music of a marriage-procession came to the roof above the gentle hum of the city, and a string of flying-foxes crossed the face of the low moon.

"I have prayed," said Ameera, after a long pause, "I have prayed for two things. First, that I may die in thy stead if thy death is demanded, and in the second that I may die in the place of the child. I have prayed to the Prophet and to Beebee Miriam [the Virgin Mary]. Thinkest thou either will hear?"

"From thy lips who would not hear the lightest word?"

"I asked for straight talk, and thou hast given me sweet talk. Will my prayers be heard?"

"How can I say? God is very good."

"Of that I am not sure. Listen now. When I die, or the child dies, what is thy fate? Living, thou wilt return to the bold white *mem-log*, for kind calls to kind."

"Not always."

"With a woman, no; with a man it is otherwise. Thou wilt in this life, later on, go back to thine own folk. That I could almost endure, for I should be dead. But in thy very death thou wilt be taken away to a strange place and a paradise that I do not know."

"Will it be paradise?"

"Surely, for who would harm thee? But we two—I and the child—shall be elsewhere, and we cannot come to thee, nor canst thou come to us. In the old days, before the child was born, I did not think of these things; but now I think of them always. It is very hard talk."

"It will fall as it will fall. To-morrow we do not know, but to-day and love we know well. Surely we are happy now."

"So happy that it were well to make our happiness assured. And thy Beebee Miriam should listen to me; for she is also a woman. But then she would envy me! It is not seemly for men to worship a woman."

Holden laughed aloud at Ameera's little spasm of jealousy.

"Is it not seemly? Why didst thou not turn me from worship of thee, then?"

"Thou a worshipper! And of me? My king, for all thy sweet words, well I know that I am thy servant and thy slave, and the dust under thy feet. And I would not have it otherwise. See!"

Before Holden could prevent her she stooped forward and touched his feet; recovering herself with a little laugh she hugged Tota close to her bosom. Then, almost savagely:

"Is it true that the bold white *mem-log* live for three times the length of my life? Is it true that they make their marriages not before they are old women?"

"They marry as do others—when they are women."

"That I know, but they wed when they are twenty-five. Is that true?"

"That is true."

"*Ya illah!* At twenty-five! Who would of his own will take a wife even of eighteen? She is a woman—aging every hour. Twenty-five! I shall be an old woman at that age, and—those *mem-log* remain young forever. How I hate them!"

"What have they to do with us?"

"I cannot tell. I know only that there may now be alive on this earth a woman ten years older than I who may come to thee and take thy love ten years after I am an old woman, gray-headed, and the nurse of Tota's son. That is unjust and evil. They should die too."

"Now, for all thy years thou art a child, and shalt be picked up and carried down the staircase."

"Tota! Have a care for Tota, my lord! Thou at least art as foolish as any babe!" Ameera tucked Tota out of harm's way in the hollow of her neck, and was carried downstairs laughing in Holden's arms, while Tota opened his eyes and smiled after the manner of the lesser angels.

He was a silent infant, and, almost before Holden could realise that he was in the world, developed into a small gold-coloured little god and unquestioned despot of the house overlooking the city. Those were months of absolute happiness to Holden and Ameera—happiness withdrawn from the world, shut in behind the wooden gate that Pir Khan guarded. By day Holden did his work with an immense pity for such as were not so fortunate as himself, and a sympathy for small children that amazed and amused many mothers at the little

station gatherings. At nightfall he returned to Ameera—Ameera, full of the wondrous doings of Tota; how he had been seen to clap his hands together and move his fingers with intention and purpose—which was manifestly a miracle; how, later, he had of his own initiative crawled out of his low bedstead on to the floor and swayed on both feet for the space of three breaths.

"And they were long breaths, for my heart stood still with delight," said Ameera.

Then Tota took the beasts into his councils—the well-bullocks, the little gray squirrels, the mongoose that lived in a hole near the well, and especially Mian Mittu, the parrot, whose tail he grievously pulled, and Mian Mittu screamed till Ameera and Holden arrived.

"O villain! Child of strength! This to thy brother on the house-top! *Tobah, tobah!* Fie! Fie! But I know a charm to make him wise as Suleiman and Aflatoun [Solomon and Plato]. Now look," said Ameera. She drew from an embroidered bag a handful of almonds. "See! we count seven. In the name of God!"

She placed Mian Mittu, very angry and rumpled, on the top of his cage, and seating herself between the babe and the bird she cracked and peeled an almond less white than her teeth. "This is a true charm, my life, and do not laugh. See! I give the parrot one half and Tota the other." Mian Mittu with careful beak took his share from between Ameera's lips, and she kissed the other half into the mouth of the child, who ate it slowly with wondering eyes. "This I will do each day of seven, and without doubt he who is ours will be a bold speaker and wise. Eh, Tota, what wilt thou be when thou art a man and I am gray-headed?" Tota tucked his fat legs into adorable creases. He could crawl, but he was not going to waste the spring of his youth in idle speech. He wanted Mian Mittu's tail to tweak.

When he was advanced to the dignity of a silver belt—which, with a magic square engraved on silver and hung round his neck, made up the greater part of his clothing—he staggered on a perilous journey down the garden to Pir Khan and proffered him all his jewels in exchange for one little ride on Holden's horse, having seen his mother's mother chaffering with peddlers in the veranda. Pir Khan wept and

set the untried feet on his own gray head in sign of fealty, and brought the bold adventurer to his mother's arms, vowing that Tota would be a leader of men ere his beard was grown.

One hot evening, while he sat on the roof between his father and mother watching the never-ending warfare of the kites that the city boys flew, he demanded a kite of his own with Pir Khan to fly it, because he had a fear of dealing with anything larger than himself, and when Holden called him a "spark" he rose to his feet and answered slowly in defence of his new-found individuality: "*Hum'park nahin hai. Hum admi hai* [I am no spark, but a man]."

The protest made Holden choke and devote himself very seriously to a consideration of Tota's future. He need hardly have taken the trouble. The delight of that life was too perfect to endure. Therefore it was taken away as many things are taken away in India—suddenly and without warning. The little lord of the house, as Pir Khan called him, grew sorrowful and complained of pains who had never known the meaning of pain. Ameera, wild with terror, watched him through the night, and in the dawning of the second day the life was shaken out of him by fever—the seasonal autumn fever. It seemed altogether impossible that he could die, and neither Ameera nor Holden at first believed the evidence of the little body on the bedstead. Then Ameera beat her head against the wall and would have flung herself down the well in the garden had Holden not restrained her by main force.

One mercy only was granted to Holden. He rode to his office in broad daylight and found waiting him an unusually heavy mail that demanded concentrated attention and hard work. He was not, however, alive to this kindness of the gods.

III

The first shock of a bullet is no more than a brisk pinch. The wrecked body does not send in its protest to the soul till ten or fifteen seconds later. Holden realised his pain slowly, exactly as he had realised his happiness, and with the same imperious necessity for hiding all traces of it. In the beginning he only felt that there had been a loss, and that Ameera needed comforting, where she sat with her head on

her knees shivering as Mian Mittu from the housetop called: *Tota! Tota! Tota!* Later all his world and the daily life of it rose up to hurt him. It was an outrage that any one of the children at the band-stand in the evening should be alive and clamorous, when his own child lay dead. It was more than mere pain when one of them touched him, and stories told by over-fond fathers of their children's latest performances cut him to the quick. He could not declare his pain. He had neither help, comfort, nor sympathy; and Ameera at the end of each weary day would lead him through the hell of self-questioning reproach which is reserved for those who have lost a child, and believe that with a little—just a little—more care it might have been saved.

"Perhaps," Ameera would say, "I did not take sufficient heed. Did I, or did I not? The sun on the roof that day when he played so long alone and I was—*ahi!* braiding my hair—it may be that the sun then bred the fever. If I had warned him from the sun he might have lived. But oh, my life, say that I am guiltless! Thou knowest that I loved him as I love thee. Say that there is no blame on me, or I shall die—I shall die!"

"There is no blame—before God, none. It was written, and how could we do aught to save? What has been, has been. Let it go, beloved."

"He was all my heart to me. How can I let the thought go when my arm tells me every night that he is not here? *Ahi! Ahi!* O Tota, come back to me—come back again, and let us be all together as it was before!"

"Peace, peace! For thine own sake, and for mine also, if thou lovest me—rest."

"By this I know thou dost not care; and how shouldst thou? The white men have hearts of stone and souls of iron. Oh, that I had married a man of mine own people—though he beat me—and had never eaten the bread of an alien!"

"Am I an alien—mother of my son?"

"What else—*sahib?* . . . Oh, forgive me—forgive! The death has driven me mad. Thou art the life of my heart, and the light of my eyes, and the breath of my life, and—and I have put thee from me, though it was but for a moment. If thou goest away, to whom shall I look for help? Do not

be angry. Indeed, it was the pain that spoke and not thy slave."

"I know, I know. We be two who were three. The greater need therefore that we should be one."

They were sitting on the roof as of custom. The night was a warm one in early spring, and sheet-lightning was dancing on the horizon to a broken tune played by far-off thunder. Ameera settled herself in Holden's arms.

"The dry earth is lowing like a cow for the rain, and I —I am afraid. It was not like this when we counted the stars. But thou lovest me as much as before, though a bond is taken away? Answer!"

"I love more because a new bond has come out of the sorrow that we have eaten together, and that thou knowest."

"Yea, I knew," said Ameera in a very small whisper. "But it is good to hear thee say so, my life, who art so strong to help. I will be a child no more, but a woman and an aid to thee. Listen! Give me my *sitar* and I will sing bravely."

She took the light silver-studded *sitar* and began a song of the great hero Rajah Rasalu. The hand failed on the strings, the tune halted, checked, and at a low note turned off to the poor little nursery-rhyme about the wicked crow:

"'And the wild plums grow in the jungle, only a penny a pound,
Only a penny a pound, *baba*—only . . .'"

Then came the tears and the piteous rebellion against fate till she slept, moaning a little in her sleep, with the right arm thrown clear of the body as though it protected something that was not there. It was after this night that life became a little easier for Holden. The ever-present pain of loss drove him into his work, and the work repaid him by filling up his mind for nine or ten hours a day. Ameera sat alone in the house and brooded, but grew happier when she understood that Holden was more at ease, according to the custom of women. They touched happiness again, but this time with caution.

"It was because we loved Tota that he died. The jealousy of God was upon us," said Ameera. "I have hung up a large black jar before our window to turn the evil eye from us, and we must make no protestations of delight, but go softly

underneath the stars, lest God find us out. Is that not good talk, worthless one?"

She had shifted the accent on the word that means "beloved," in proof of the sincerity of her purpose. But the kiss that followed the new christening was a thing that any deity might have envied. They went about henceforward saying: "It is naught, it is naught"; and hoping that all the Powers heard.

The Powers were busy on other things. They had allowed thirty million people four years of plenty wherein men fed well and the crops were certain, and the birth-rate rose year by year; the districts reported a purely agricultural population varying from nine hundred to two thousand to the square mile of the overburdened earth; and the Member for Lower Tooting, wandering about India in pot-hat and frock-coat, talked largely of the benefits of British rule and suggested as the one thing needful the establishment of a duly qualified electoral system and a general bestowal of the franchise. His long-suffering hosts smiled and made him welcome, and when he paused to admire, with pretty picked words, the blossom of the blood-red dhak-tree that had flowered untimely for a sign of what was coming, they smiled more than ever.

It was the Deputy Commissioner of Kot-Kumharsen, staying at the club for a day, who lightly told a tale that made Holden's blood run cold as he overheard the end.

"He won't bother any one any more. Never saw a man so astonished in my life. By Jove, I thought he meant to ask a question in the House about it. Fellow passenger in his ship—dined next him—bowled over by cholera and died in eighteen hours. You needn't laugh, you fellows. The Member for Lower Tooting is awfully angry about it; but he's more scared. I think he's going to take his enlightened self out of India."

"I'd give a good deal if he were knocked over. It might keep a few vestrymen of his kidney to their own parish. But what's this about cholera? It's full early for anything of that kind," said the warden of an unprofitable salt-lick.

"Don't know," said the Deputy Commissioner reflectively. "We've got locusts with us. There's sporadic cholera all along the north—at least we're calling it sporadic for decen-

cy's sake. The spring crops are short in five districts, and nobody seems to know where the rains are. It's nearly March now. I don't want to scare anybody, but it seems to me that Nature's going to audit her accounts with a big red pencil this summer."

"Just when I wanted to take leave, too!" said a voice across the room.

"There won't be much leave this year, but there ought o be a great deal of promotion. I've come in to persuade the Government to put my pet canal on the list of famine-relief works. It's an ill wind that blows no good. I shall get that canal finished at last."

"Is it the old programme then," said Holden; "famine, fever, and cholera?"

"Oh, no. Only local scarcity and an unusual prevalence of seasonal sickness. You'll find it all in the reports if you live till next year. You're a lucky chap. *You* haven't got a wife to send out of harm's way. The hill stations ought to be full of women this year."

"I think you're inclined to exaggerate the talk in the *bazars*," said a young civilian in the secretariat. "Now I have observed——"

"I daresay you have," said the Deputy Commissioner, "but you've a great deal more to observe, my son. In the meantime, I wish to observe to you—" and he drew him aside to discuss the construction of the canal that was so dear to his heart. Holden went to his bungalow and began to understand that he was not alone in the world, and also that he was afraid for the sake of another—which is the most soul-satisfying fear known to man.

Two months later, as the Deputy had foretold, Nature began to audit her accounts with a red pencil. On the heels of the spring reapings came a cry for bread, and the Government, which had decreed that no man should die of want, sent wheat. Then came the cholera from all four quarters of the compass. It struck a pilgrim-gathering of half a million at a sacred shrine. Many died at the feet of their god; the others broke and ran over the face of the land carrying the pestilence with them. It smote a walled city and killed two hundred a day. The people crowded the trains, hanging on to the foot-boards and squatting on the roofs of the car-

riages, and the cholera followed them, for at each station they dragged out the dead and the dying. They died by the road-side, and the horses of the Englishmen shied at the corpses in the grass. The rains did not come, and the earth turned to iron lest man should escape death by hiding in her. The English sent their wives away to the hills and went about their work, coming forward as they were bidden to fill the gaps in the fighting-line. Holden, sick with fear of losing his chiefest treasure on earth, had done his best to persuade Ameera to go away with her mother to the Himalayas.

"Why should I go?" said she one evening on the roof.

"There is sickness, and people are dying, and all the white *mem-log* have gone."

"All of them?"

"All—unless perhaps there remain some old scald-head who vexes her husband's heart by running risk of death."

"Nay; who stays is my sister, and thou must not abuse her, for I will be a scald-head too. I am glad all the bold *mem-log* are gone."

"Do I speak to a woman, or a babe? Go to the hills and I will see to it that thou goest like a queen's daughter. Think, child. In a red-lacquered bullock-cart, veiled and curtained, with brass peacocks upon the pole and red cloth hangings. I will send two orderlies for guard, and——"

"Peace! Thou art the babe in speaking thus. What use are those toys to me. *He* would have patted the bullocks and played with the housings. For his sake, perhaps—thou hast made me very English—I might have gone. Now, I will not. Let the *mem-log* run."

"Their husbands are sending them, beloved."

"Very good talk. Since when hast thou been my husband to tell me what to do? I have but borne thee a son. Thou art only all the desire of my soul to me. How shall I depart when I know that if evil befall thee by the breadth of so much as my littlest finger-nail—is that not small?—I should be aware of it though I were in paradise. And here, this summer thou mayest die—*ai, janee,* die! and in dying they might call to tend thee a white woman, and she would rob me in the last of thy love!"

"But love is not born in a moment or on a death-bed!"

"What dost thou know of love, stone-heart? She would take thy thanks at least and, by God and the Prophet and Beebee Miriam the mother of thy Prophet, that I will never endure. My lord and my love, let there be no more foolish talk of going away. Where thou art, I am. It is enough." She put an arm round his neck and a hand on his mouth.

There are not many happinesses so complete as those that are snatched under the shadow of the sword. They sat together and laughed, calling each other openly by every pet name that could move the wrath of the gods. The city below them was locked up in its own torments. Sulphur fires blazed in the streets; the conches in the Hindu temples screamed and bellowed, for the gods were inattentive in those days. There was a service in the great Mohammedan shrine, and the call to prayer from the minarets was almost unceasing. They heard the wailing in the houses of the dead, and once the shriek of a mother who had lost a child and was calling for its return. In the gray dawn they saw the dead borne out through the city gates, each litter with its own little knot of mourners. Wherefore they kissed each other and shivered.

It was a red and heavy audit, for the land was very sick and needed a little breathing space ere the torrent of cheap life should flood it anew. The children of immature fathers and undeveloped mothers made no resistance. They were cowed and sat still, waiting till the sword should be sheathed in November if it were so willed. There were gaps among the English, but the gaps were filled. The work of superintending famine-relief, cholera-sheds, medicine-distribution, and what little sanitation was possible, went forward because it was so ordered.

Holden had been told to keep himself in readiness to move to replace the next man who should fall. There were twelve hours in each day when he could not see Ameera, and she might die in three. He was considering what his pain would be if he could not see her for three months, or if she died out of his sight. He was absolutely certain that her death would be demanded—so certain that when he looked up from the telegram and saw Pir Khan breathless in the doorway, he laughed aloud. "And?" said he——

"When there is a cry in the night and the spirit flutters

"For the mercy of God be silent a while. Go out and mourn where I cannot hear."

"*Sahib,* she will be buried in four hours."

"I know the custom. I shall go ere she is taken away. That matter is in thy hands. Look to it, that the bed on which—on which she lies——"

"Aha! That beautiful red-lacquered bed. I have long desired——"

"That the bed is left here untouched for my disposal. All else in the house is thine. Hire a cart, take everything, go hence, and before sunrise let there be nothing in this house but that which I have ordered thee to respect."

"I am an old woman. I would stay at least for the days of mourning, and the rains have just broken. Whither shall I go?"

"What is that to me? My order is that there is a going. The house-gear is worth a thousand rupees, and my orderly shall bring thee a hundred rupees to-night."

"That is very little. Think of the cart-hire."

"It shall be nothing unless thou goest, and with speed. O woman, get hence and leave me with my dead!"

The mother shuffled down the staircase, and in her anxiety to take stock of the house-fittings forgot to mourn. Holden stayed by Ameera's side and the rain roared on the roof. He could not think connectedly by reason of the noise, though he made many attempts to do so. Then four sheeted ghosts glided dripping into the room and stared at him through their veils. They were the washers of the dead. Holden left the room and went out to his horse. He had come in a dead, stifling calm through ankle-deep dust. He found the courtyard a rain-lashed pond alive with frogs; a torrent of yellow water ran under the gate, and a roaring wind drove the bolts of the rain like buckshot against the mud walls. Pir Khan was shivering in his little hut by the gate, and the horse was stamping uneasily in the water.

"I have been told the *sahib's* order," said Pir Khan. "It is well. This house is now desolate. I go also, for my monkey face would be a reminder of that which has been. Concerning the bed, I will bring that to thy house yonder in the morning; but remember, *sahib,* it will be to thee a knife turning in a green wound. I go upon a pilgrimage, and I

will take no money. I have grown fat in the protection of the Presence whose sorrow is my sorrow. For the last time I hold his stirrup."

He touched Holden's foot with both hands, and the horse sprang out into the road, where the creaking bamboos were whipping the sky and all the frogs were chuckling. Holden could not see for the rain in his face. He put his hands before his eyes and muttered:

"Oh, you brute! You utter brute!"

The news of his trouble was already in his bungalow. He read the knowledge in his butler's eyes when Ahmed Khan brought in food, and for the first and last time in his life laid a hand upon his master's shoulder, saying: "Eat, *sahib,* eat. Meat is good against sorrow. I also have known. Moreover the shadows come and go, *sahib*; the shadows come and go. These be curried eggs."

Holden could neither eat nor sleep. The heavens sent down eight inches of rain in that night and washed the earth clean. The waters tore down walls, broke roads, and scoured open the shallow graves on the Mohammedan burying-ground. All next day it rained, and Holden sat still in his house considering his sorrow. On the morning of the third day he received a telegram which said only: "Ricketts, Myndonie. Dying. Holden relieve. Immediate." Then he thought that before he had departed he would look at the house wherein he had been master and lord. There was a break in the weather, and the rank earth steamed with vapour.

He found that the rains had torn down the mud pillars of the gateway, and the heavy wooden gate that had guarded his life hung lazily from one hinge. There was grass three inches high in the courtyard; Pir Khan's lodge was empty, and the sodden thatch sagged between the beams. A gray squirrel was in possession of the veranda, as if the house had been untenanted for thirty years instead of three days. Ameera's mother had removed everything except some mildewed matting. The *tick-tick* of the little scorpions as they hurried across the floor was the only sound in the house. Ameera's room and the other one where Tota had lived were heavy with mildew; and the narrow staircase leading to the roof was streaked and stained with rain-borne mud. Holden saw all these things, and came out again to meet in the road

Durga Dass, his landlord—portly, affable, clothed in white muslin, and driving a C-spring buggy. He was overlooking his property to see how the roofs stood the stress of the first rains.

"I have heard," said he, "you will not take this place any more, *sahib?*"

"What are you going to do with it?"

"Perhaps I shall let it again."

"Then I will keep it on while I am away."

Durga Dass was silent for some time. "You shall not take it on, *sahib,*" he said. "When I was a young man I also— But to-day I am a member of the Municipality. Ho! Ho! No. When the birds have gone, what need to keep the nest? I will have it pulled down—the timber will sell for something always. It shall be pulled down, and the Municipality shall make a road across, as they desire, from the burning-ghaut to the city wall, so that no man may say where this house stood."

THE END